# Supervisory Management

DECEMBER 1956


## WHAT'S YOUR TRADE-MARK?

Everyone has one—and his success or failure may depend upon it

## WORK SAMPLING IN ACTION

Wasted manpower, time, and money show up clearly when the workday is sampled

## YOUR COMMUNITY NEEDS LEADERS

Many management men are meeting this need and getting some unexpected dividends


AMERICAN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

# EDITOR TO SUPERVISOR

AT THE HEART of man's progress lies a significant activity—the exchange of ideas. This has been largely responsible for one development after another up through the ages. Picture, early in the history of the race, two cavemen discussing (perhaps by gestures and grunts) various ways of starting a fire. We can imagine how each profited from the other's experience. The ancient Egyptians, by comparing notes on the construction of pyramids, produced structures that are still regarded as marvels of engineering. And today men are unfolding the miracle of atomic energy through an unceasing exchange of ideas.

Individual achievement, too, is closely related to the receiving and giving of ideas. Notice the men who listen most carefully to others, who read most seriously what qualified men write, who in turn test their own ideas by expressing them to their associates. Out of this activity comes personal growth and success that otherwise would not be possible.

SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT is published to foster the exchange of ideas in the field of supervision. It is written to contribute to the broad progress of management and to stimulate individual achievement. It is based on the belief that the man who is to advance and grow must—over and above his job—take time to read and think and compare his ideas with others. It is based on the belief that intelligent reading over the course of years, coupled with challenging work, is almost unmatched as a way of broadening a man's perspective, maturing his judgment, and advancing his career.

SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT is not and never will be a magazine written by armchair experts. Rather, it will present the thinking of men who have had firsthand experience with management problems. Over the months, readers will be more effective in their jobs because a plant superintendent in Illinois, an industrial engineer in Texas, a training director in California, a supervisor in Michigan, a company president in New York, took the time to relate his experiences and voice his opinions.

We extend to you a warm invitation to participate in our exchange of ideas. We sincerely believe it will play a part in your personal progress.

Hubert Clay

# Supervisory Management

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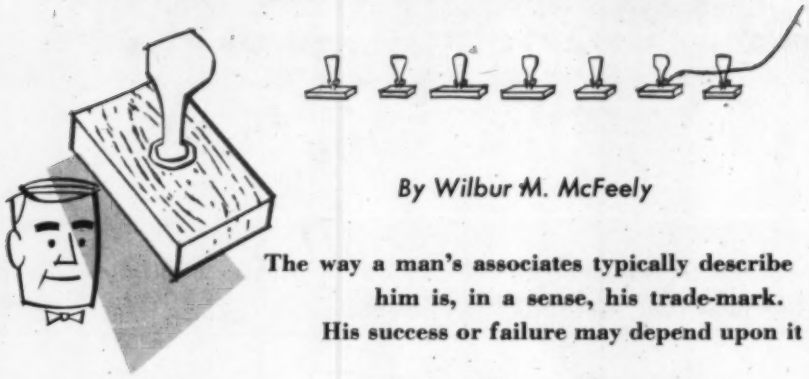
# What's your trade-mark?



*By Wilbur M. McFeely*

**The way a man's associates typically describe him is, in a sense, his trade-mark. His success or failure may depend upon it**

ALMOST every company has a trade-mark. We buy clothes, razors, cigarettes, frozen foods, and other products according to some brand name we've learned to like. Companies spend a great deal of time, money, and effort in promoting brand-name preferences through a trade-mark. A firm's success is determined by the reputation of its products. This is why trade-marks are so important.

People have trade-marks, too. These personal labels are as important to our own progress as commercial trade-marks are to the success of a company.

Very often it's difficult for us to recognize our own trade-mark, but others know it and respond to it in certain ways. Three very important questions arise for the man who wants to know more about his trade-mark: (1) How do we get our trade-mark? (2) What trade-mark should we have? (3) How can we get the trade-mark we want?

People make their own trade-marks. They can be good, bad, average. For the gifted few it's fairly easy to get a highly desirable trade-mark. But for most of us it takes considerable effort.

Our trade-mark is formed by repeated incidents that reveal our basic aptitudes and attitudes. Each incident in itself may be unimportant, but taken together they form a consistent pattern. We get the nod or miss it when being considered for promotion as a result of what this pattern shows about our present accomplishments and our potential for future growth.

People judge others by their trade-marks every day: In a large heavy-machinery plant, a trainer was breaking in a group of new expediters. In his final session, he said, "Now, let me tell you about the foremen you

will work with. Take Jim, over in the foundry. He's the political type. He'll make you feel right at home. He'll be most cooperative and give you all kinds of assurances. But don't be fooled. He's quite a procrastinator. You'll have to check on him constantly.

"Then you'll meet Bill, in the machine shop. He rules with a firm hand. He'll seem to have little time for you and will try to get you out of his way in a hurry—almost a brush-off. But don't worry. He'll know what you want and he'll get it done. He's tough, but everyone likes and respects him because he shows no favoritism. He's a square shooter, and you'll always know where you stand. You'll find out that you can count on what he tells you.

"Tom, over in the pattern shop, is the jumpy kind. He lives in a constant state of crisis. Don't try to tell him your story until you get him settled down. You'll have to listen to all his troubles, but sooner or later he'll listen to you. He'll cooperate, but before he does, he'll make sure you know you're cutting his heart out. Just bleed with him and everything will be all right."

The trainer continued until he had covered each foreman. In brief descriptive phrases, he pinpointed each man's trade-mark. Each was fashioned from the way he acted and reacted every day on the job.

Hundreds of other examples could be mentioned. In one case, a man was passed over because, as one executive put it, "He thinks more about his stomach than he does about his job. I'm tired of seeing that bottle of bromo. His greatest achievement seems to be that he has more stomach trouble than anyone else in the plant."

Every job has its own standards of performance and of personal conduct. The man who gets the nod is the one whose trade-mark most nearly matches the standards for the job.

No two trade-marks are exactly alike. Men differ. Their jobs and their company situations differ. However, supervisors have something in common. The details of their trade-mark designs may be different, but they have to get the same kind of job done under similar conditions.

The production supervisor, for example, regardless of the product or process, is concerned with four important factors: quantity, quality, cost, and time. He must produce a specified quantity of goods within prescribed quality standards. He must get this production out at a competitive cost and in time to meet the customer's delivery requirements.

This is a difficult and challenging

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task. Each of the four factors contains many variables. To keep them in balance requires constant vigilance and a delicate touch.

Analysis of certain men shows that not only do they fail to keep these factors in balance, but that many of them never really try. They habitually think in terms of quantity, for example, and constantly try to get by on quality. Or they stress quality of production but are unable to control

costs or meet delivery schedules. And so it goes.

With four such complicated production balls to juggle, we're bound to let one of them slip now and then. The problem is not so much that we can't always keep them in perfect motion, but that so many of us don't even try to get all four into play. This is our greatest trade-mark deficiency.

Another deficiency for many of us is our attitude toward current labor conditions. We think of the past as a time when things were easier and less complex. We long to get back to the

slower pace of the good old days. In doing this, we fail to face the fact that adjustment to the present and preparation for the future is the key to successful action.

During World War II, it was commonplace for supervisors, faced with manpower shortages, inexperienced and sometimes undisciplined help, to say, "Wait until this is over." They fully expected to get back to conditions they had known before. The war ended, but we did not go back. Then the cry went up, "Wait until the postwar adjustment is over." Again there was disappointment.

The truth is that we shall never go back to yesterday, and if we did, we would undoubtedly find that it, too, had its share of headaches.

We will continue to supervise in a goldfish bowl, where everyone can see what we're doing and deciding. Decisions based on whims or impulses won't stand up. This is as it should be. Our management skill increases tremendously when actions and decisions are based solely on the needs of the situation.

An essential part of our trademark is getting the job done efficiently and safely under today's conditions. Forgetting the past, we must try to get a better understanding of the supervisory skills and attitudes that will get results now and in the future.

To be of value, a company trademark must be backed by quality standards that are consistently maintained. Otherwise, the customer will consciously bypass the product, and instead of being an asset, the trademark is a liability.

This is also true of one's own trade-mark. It must be backed by personal qualities of high caliber: sensitivity to people, an inquisitive mind, a wide range of interests, a high degree of energy and drive, and a willingness to keep on learning.

But just possessing these necessary aptitudes and skills does not guarantee us a valuable trade-mark. We have to put them into full and continual use.

First, we must gamble on over-preparation—and it is a gamble. Wise preparation always precedes the opportunity. We can never be guaranteed a full return for the effort. We have to gamble on the payoff.

Yet, almost every day we see someone hesitate to submit to the discipline of preparation in the hope that before he acts someone else will answer the question, "What's in it for me?"

At the end of the first session of a supervisory training course offered by a university, two men went up to the instructor. The first said, "I'd like to withdraw. About five years ago, I took a similar course and I think I know what's coming." After he left, the second said, "I took a course somewhat like this before, but I think I'll stick with it because I've never taken it with you."

Even after five years of change, the first man still felt he could learn nothing new. The second gambled that a new face would give him some new and useful tools. He was not

only willing to gamble, he was over-preparing for the future.

Another point: we must learn how to use every natural asset we have. Naturally, all of us must try to overcome our weaknesses. But in our concern with this phase of our development, we often overlook the fact that each of us has some special skills that no one else can quite duplicate.

Men who make wise use of their particular strengths will not be shunted off the main line because of

a particular weakness. It's the balance that counts. No one develops all his abilities at the same rate. And it's easier to develop strengths than overcome weaknesses.

In working our unique personal strengths into our trade-mark design, we must fight against being artificial. Take the case of a supervisor we'll call Bob. He was neither tall nor short, thin nor fat. He always wore bow ties because, as he said, "There is nothing about me physically to attract attention. This way, at least, they know me as Bow-Tie Bob." Efforts of this kind wear thin quickly. A trade-mark that retains customer acceptance is based on sounder qualities; otherwise, it can't survive long-term competition.

We also have to have faith in the ability of people to see us as we are. It's natural to want to belong and to be accepted. Management people, especially, need to be accepted as leaders of one group and as associates and subordinates in others. These relationships are basic in industry.

This pressure leads certain men into strange behavior. Some develop a studied pace as they move about. Others have a special way of entering a room. Many participate in discussions in such a way that they'll never be caught on the end of a limb. Still others are constantly searching for an angle, or contriving to be seen with the "right people."

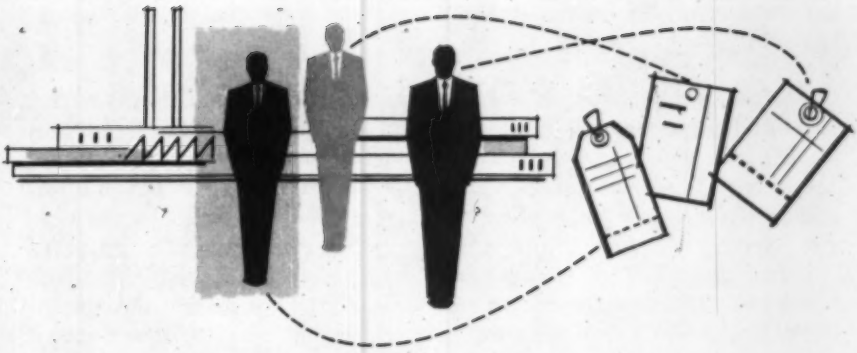
The truth is that with adequate preparation and appropriate habits and attitudes, we have little to fear. Within surprising limits, people accept others for what they should be until they prove inadequate.

People assume a person is qualified to supervise, for example, until he proves he is not. How many times do we question the right of a speaker to address a group? We may have serious misgivings after the speech, but seldom before.

To be successful, our efforts must be continuous. Management is a never-ending job. We live in an atmosphere of constant change. We find ourselves in the same position as the young captain who rushed breathlessly to Napoleon to tell him of a battle won, only to be asked, "What victory are you going to win tomorrow?" Recognition for successful achievement is a useful and powerful force, but it can also rock us to sleep.

We know it is tomorrow's efforts that count, but how frequently we hear people complain: "After all I've done for them . . ." How easy it is to forget that we have already been paid for yesterday's work and that we continue to be paid in the expectation of new achievements today and tomorrow. Continuous effort is vital to a satisfactory trade-mark design.

Finally, we must make a commitment. Management is more than a job; it is a way of life in which we must always put first things first. Hobbies and other outside interests help make a balanced man, but it is still true that genuine devotion to a career is all-important. As one executive stated, "I have never seen a man succeed in management without a sense of dedication." ◆



# Three Supervisors "Tag" Their Production Control Problems

*By George Bevans*

**At a steel plant in Pennsylvania, a metal precision parts plant in Ohio, and a sports jacket concern in the East, supervisors came up with production control ideas that really paid off**

DOZENS of industrial studies have shown that one of the most common causes of operating snags is faulty control – or the lack of any control at all. Here are three problems common to most manufacturing operations: controlling the movement of material within the plant to assure its delivery to the right destination, preventing damaged material from continuing on into the production line, and keeping an accurate record of each worker's individual output. Three different supervisors successfully attacked each of these problems and benefited themselves accordingly.

At a big steel plant in Pennsylvania, wire is drawn and coiled to specifications received from each of ten different departments, who then make it into different end products. However, a noticeable loss in transportation time took place because coils were often delivered to the wrong department.

The supervisor of the coiling section suggested that each of the ten departments be given a separate code color—one red, another blue, etc. He suggested that tags then be made up and given to him, each batch imprinted with a department's code color, in addition to the department's name, which the tags in use already carried. He would then attach the proper tag to each coil before it left his department for delivery. Soon the truckers would be able to identify a coil's correct destination just by the

tag's color, without having to read the printing on the tag.

The idea appealed to the systems engineer. The purchasing agent called in the representative of an established tag manufacturer to discuss the proposed tag. The tag manufacturer's man further suggested that the hole through which the string was run should be reinforced with a patch, to make sure that the tag wouldn't become separated from the coil.

The system was tried – and it worked. The company management says that mistaken deliveries and their subsequent rerouting have been practically eliminated, thus greatly reducing unproductive trucking and labor time and, of course, over-all production costs. The supervisor who suggested this idea received a substantial increase in pay.

### *Catching damaged material*

Another case where a supervisor came up with an idea to improve production control occurred in a large Ohio plant making a wide variety of small metal precision parts. Although production was inspected at different locations in the processing line, damaged material was constantly being processed beyond the point where the damage occurred. This not only was a waste of machine and labor time, but also sometimes caused machine damage, with further loss in labor time while a machine was down.

A supervisor in one of the processing sections suggested to the head engineer that inspectors might be more careful about checking the quality of material passing through the production line if a written record were kept of each inspection. The head engineer agreed. Together they worked out a tag system for controlling inspection.

As a batch of material passes through each stage of production to the final end product, a tag goes with it. The inspector at each stage of production initials a box in the tag representing that stage, showing that he has inspected the material and found it satisfactory. Thus, if at some later stage it is discovered that the material is defective, the inspector who approved it can be instantly identified.

Each inspector is also required to keep on a chart the detailed findings of his inspection. If these don't agree with the actual measurements of the faulty material he has O.K.'d, his inspection is proved inaccurate. As a result of this simple tag-control system, inspection has improved enormously, damaged material is segregated right where the damage occurs and no longer gets into further processing,

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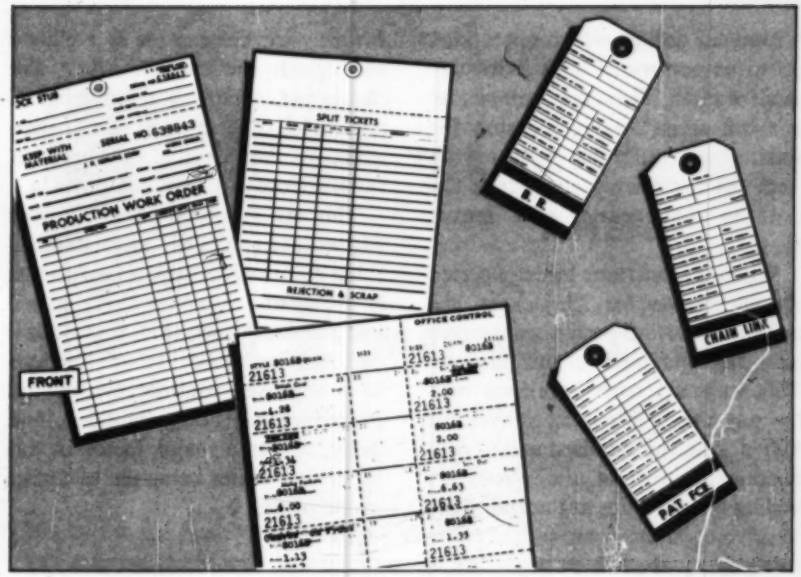


**Three supervisors in three different companies came up with ideas on how tags could be used to improve production control. At left is a production work order used to keep track of inspections made on small metal parts during different phases of production. Tags in center are employed by a sports jacket manufacturer to keep tabs on workers' piecework earnings. Colored tags at right cut down on mistakes in delivering wire coils to various departments of a Pennsylvania steel plant. Each department has a different code color which is used on the tags.**

and machine and man-hour output have increased. The supervisor who suggested this will soon be promoted to a responsible position in the quality control department.

### *Keeping output records*

An Eastern concern making sports jackets owes its present payroll system to a former supervisor, now its plant manager. This is strictly a piecework operation, with each operation bearing its own pay rate. There are 26 operations in all, some 19 to 20 of which are performed on every garment going through the production line, depending on the garment's particular style. To make sure that the plant's record of each worker's output is accurate, this supervisor, with help from an experienced tag manufacturer, designed a tag with headings at the top under which can be indicated the style number to be manufactured and the number of garments, usually 25, to be made from a particular lot of material.

Each tag contains 26 detachable stubs, one for each of the 26 operations, and is numbered accordingly.

A foreman decides which operations are to be performed on a particular batch of cloth. Then, for example, he tears off from the tag the stub for making sleeves, attaches it to the cloth cut for sleeves, and sends the cloth to the operator who makes them.

When the operator has completed enough sleeves for 25 jackets, she turns them in and pastes her tag stub on a sheet gummed for this purpose. This stub has been imprinted with the pay rate for making sleeves for 100 jackets, the standard unit of production throughout the plant. By adding her tag stubs at the end of the day, any worker can see at a glance how much she earned. When she checks out, she turns in her sheet of tag stubs. The payroll clerk then makes up the record of pay due each worker from the stubs she turns in.

This tag system is so simple that any worker can easily understand it. It has eliminated all disputes, formerly frequent, over work completed and pay due. In addition, worker output has increased, labor relations have improved considerably, payroll procedure has been simplified, and lastly, it was a major factor in this supervisor's later being put in charge of the plant. ◆

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## When You Start Talking — Are You Boring?

Some time ago, newspaper columnist Sydney J. Harris made some telling comments on why so many people are dishwater dull as conversationalists:

"The conversational trouble with the average man is that he wants too hard to be right—or to be thought right. That is why he usually stays within the limits of shop talk. This is why his conversation is so dull.

"The willingness to take a flier, to send up a large, gaily colored balloon, to set off a verbal firecracker, is the way to transform a dull dialogue into a fascinating chase of ideas."

This observation also indicates that sometimes education can be an added handicap to interesting conversation. The educated person has learned to be conservative about many things. He's found that many "facts" aren't really facts at all. He's discovered that blanket rules seldom cover every situation. He has learned to keep quiet until he has his thinking organized.

The educated person may be logical and rational, but he runs the risk of losing the delightfully irrational desire to send up "gaily colored balloons."

Think about your own conversation. Are you logical, coherent—and dull? Or are you sometimes charmingly illogical, contradictory—and interesting?

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Only the common cold is a greater factor in industrial absenteeism than is emotional disturbance. Thirty per cent of manpower loss can be traced directly to psychiatric difficulties. Mental illness and personality disorders affect more people than all other illnesses combined. People are industry's unfinished business.

—Ralph T. Collins, M.D., quoted in *Canadian Business*

*A Special Message from the President of AMA*

Lawrence A. Appley

# THE ROAD AHEAD FOR MANAGEMENT

FOLLOWING the New York Yankee victory in the World Series of 1953, Red Smith, in his New York *Herald Tribune* column, "Views of Sports," took exception to the rallying cry, "Break up the Yankees." It seems that the way most people approach the problem of enabling some other baseball club to win a pennant once in a while is to make the Yankees less powerful rather than to make the other teams better.

Red Smith said, " 'Break up the Yankees' was a foolish slogan when it was coined and it set an unworthy goal. The aim should never be to destroy excellence, to bring the best down to the common level of mediocrity. Don't break up the Yankees. Build up the others. Work harder, get better, and beat them."

This is a very sound philosophy. It contains a valuable lesson for men at all levels of management. It helps us chart a course for action. For once we set our sights toward becoming better, we can begin to plan how we are going to do it in an orderly fashion.

This is the basis of personal-development programs for individuals and of scientific-management studies for companies. We are witnessing today a significant trend in the ranks of American business and industrial management. Never in history have people in management shown such a great and intense desire for help and information related to the job of management as is indicated today. We at the American Management Association are proud to be playing a part, through our conferences, seminars, and publications, in answering this need.

We do, however, observe certain men who have the strongest desire for help and information. They are *not* the ones who are inclined to *let* things work rather than *make* them work. They are not the ones who let things come as they may rather than

influence how or when they come, or prevent their arrival.

Many men are inclined to let organizations work rather than to make them work. Such leadership may get by for a while. But such organizations live in spite of their leadership, not because of it. Many of us are inclined to let democracy work rather than make it work. If those who are a part of democracy would put one half the effort into making it work that those who are promoting various "isms" put into their plans, there is not a single form of government or society that could challenge democracy.

It is a relatively simple matter to find people who can sit on a job, handle events as they come, meet emergencies, and get by. It is difficult to find individuals who can plan, who can make events happen as they want them to happen, who, through such planning, can reduce emergencies and keep their organizations in positions of leadership.

### *Two basic elements of management*

Management divides itself into at least two basic elements: planning and controlling. A person who has supervision over others is expected to:

1. Determine what work is to be accomplished.
2. Select the most qualified people to do the work.
3. Check periodically how well they are doing it.
4. Find methods by which they will do it better.

The manager or supervisor must plan his approach to the problems presented by the activities he supervises. He must then establish mediums of control that will assure him that the people under his direction perform to the best of their ability, according to the plan. Since human beings are what they are, performance will always lag behind planned objectives. That is why we have supervision. If mere planning could produce human performance in accordance with the plan, supervision would not be required.

### *A basic principle*

There is one truth that has been learned by hundreds of executives and supervisors which has had decided effect upon their attitudes and practices. The principle is this:

Management is taking people as they are, with what knowledge, training, experience, and background they have accumulated, and developing those people by increasing their knowledge, improving their skill, and correcting their habits and attitudes. Upon this improvement depends the success of any managerial or supervisory effort.

Put this principle to the test. Try to think of any activity with which you are dealing that does not involve the development of people. The broken lathe, the "down" time on the electric furnace, the requisition for new equipment—all require the selection, the training, and the supervision of people in order that these activities may be handled properly.

The easiest way to get somebody to be what you want him to be is to

treat him as though he were. If you want a baby to talk baby talk, then talk baby talk to him. But if you want him to talk English, then talk to him as you talk to others who speak English. If you wish a worker to have a broader interest in the activities of the organization, then discuss those activities with him on the assumption that he has.

In inaugurating SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT, we at AMA have proceeded on the assumption that supervisors *do* have an interest in the job of management. We believe that they want to know more and more about the broad problems which they will encounter and which they must learn to handle if they are to advance up the management ladder. We do not profess to have all the answers. No one has. But we hope to provide a medium by which supervisors can sample the thinking of others and keep abreast of new ideas and developments. ◆

## Stopping a Train with Wind

Many years ago George Westinghouse had a small shop a mile from the Schenectady station of the New York Central. From there he could see the trainmen respond to the "down brakes" signal, which the engineer blew on his whistle. All the trainmen would jump to their positions on the car platforms and begin to turn the handwheels that tightened up the brake mechanisms under the cars.

The more Westinghouse watched them, the more convinced he became that it was a crude and ineffective waste of time and energy. It should not take a full mile to stop a train, nor should it require the whole crew to do it. He pondered over many possible solutions, but none were workable.

One day he read an article in a magazine about the great new source of power that was to replace steam for the driving of engines—compressed air. Here, he thought, might be the solution he'd been searching for. He did not, however, attempt to sell the idea until many months of experimentation in his own shop had shown him it would work. And when it was tried under practical working conditions, it was tried on a single train.

The proof of its applicability was more spectacular than most foremen can hope for when they suggest new methods to their managements. Westinghouse and several New York Central directors and division heads were in the baggage car of the train as it sped toward the Schenectady stop. Suddenly the engineer spied a balky horse in the shafts of a farmer's rig, obstinately stalled directly across the tracks. Instantly and automatically, he sounded the down-brakes signal, and then remembered the new air brakes. He slammed them on full force. The train stopped a few feet short of the balky horse, but the directors and division heads and Westinghouse were all piled up in a heap at the forward end of the baggage car.

Westinghouse revolutionized railroad travel the world over by seeing as a problem something that others had seen merely as an accepted practice; by fitting what he had read into the solution for which he was seeking; and by testing his solution to see that it was good.

—Adapted, by permission, from *Do You Want to Be a Foreman?* by Albert Walton. Copyright, 1941. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

*effective management in arbitration*

# HANDLING WORKERS WHO BREAK RULES

*By Lee Epstein*

**What should be done when an employee breaks a rule? Is it better to be tough or easy on him? Sometimes either method can get a supervisor into trouble**

SUPERVISORS soon come to realize there are no pat answers for disciplinary problems. To be or not to be tough is a problem that has to be answered every day.

As a labor arbitrator, I've often met supervisors who felt they didn't apply too little discipline but applied it too late. Take a typical situation: A maintenance employee is ten minutes late to work. His supervisor talks to him about it, hears his excuse, asks him not to repeat the offense, and sends him back to work. The next day another employee is ten minutes late, and the technique is repeated. Again, a few days later, still another employee is late. The supervisor realizes that the gentle treatment isn't working. The next morning a production employee is a half-hour late, tying up the production line, and the supervisor goes ahead and fires him.

The discharge is contested, and after going through the regular steps in the grievance procedure, the issue comes before an arbitrator for his decision. The union says, "By its actions in the past, the company has shown that it doesn't consider lateness a cause for discharge. It is obvious that they are singling this employee out for some other reason." (He is a shop steward, union official, loyal union member, or what-have you.)

Arbitrators have often followed this sort of reasoning, which blames the supervisor while disallowing the discharge. It leads supervisors to say, "Next time, I'm not going to give an inch. The first time anybody steps out of line, I'm going to kick him out of the plant. Let's just see anybody try

and make a precedent out of *that*."

But this isn't realistic either. In the first place, the arbitrator who refuses to allow a discharge isn't relying solely on the failure to discharge for a similar violation in the past. Like your wife in an argument, he's using any reason that comes to hand to support his conclusion. Most arbitrators recognize that there's no hard-and-fast rule to apply: you can't say, without looking at the facts, that a stated cause is or is not reason for discharge. For instance, a supervisor might stand for acts from a cracker-jack employee that he wouldn't put up with for a minute from one he's been on the verge of firing for a thousand reasons for weeks.

However, precedent established by a company is important. It isn't fair to let workers break rules and get away with it—and then suddenly tighten up discipline and impose drastic penalties without warning. If a practice has been tolerated in the past, workers are entitled at least to advance notice that a new deal is going into effect.

### No pat answers

How *should* you handle this problem? There's no pat answer. You can't handle every situation in the plant as though you're going to end up arbitrating it. The immediate needs of the situation, the general policies governing treatment of personnel, your own personality, as well as that of the particular worker, may dictate actions that are proper at the time, even though they may come back to haunt you in the event of an arbitration.

### Record the incident

One of the easiest ways to avoid trouble is to record the incident. Notify the union, "Jones was late. We have only reprimanded him, but in the future we intend to discharge anyone who is late." If you can get the shop steward or union delegate in on it, threaten to fire Jones. Then relent and have a statement signed, "Jones was late. At the request of the union, the penalty was limited to a reprimand, but it is agreed that the failure to impose a greater penalty will not be considered a precedent in any other case."

If, however, you should decide to lower the boom, put a notice on the bulletin board: "Starting tomorrow, lateness for more than —— minutes will be a cause for discharge." If you do this, no employee can claim surprise.

The first employee discharged under the new rule will probably claim that he never saw the notice. But that's another story. ◆

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# NEEDS LEADERS

*By John V. Tharrett*

**Successful companies depend upon leaders, men with management experience. And the community is no different. Supervisors can help to develop it—and develop themselves at the same time**

MORE and more management men today are playing an active part in community affairs. If you're one of them, you may sometimes wonder why you take on such an extra load. And if you're not, you've probably got at least a dozen good reasons why: community activities take you away from home; they allow less time for relaxation when you're already tired from eight tough hours on the job. What, then, are the rewards that can outweigh such apparent disadvantages?

First, let's look at it in very broad terms. I'm reminded of the newly stated objectives of some of our major corporations. They've asked themselves, "Why are we in business?" The first tendency was to say, "We're in business for profit," and let it go at that. Naturally, they *have* to make a profit—if they don't, they're out of business. But the more they thought of it, the more they realized they were in business for other reasons, too. Some of the companies expressed it in different ways, but fundamentally they found they were in business not only to make a profit but also to provide satisfying and constructive lives for themselves and for their employees. You might sum it up by the word "service."

It's small wonder, therefore, that so many supervisors have become active in their community. Like their companies, their first concern is to make money—for themselves and for their families. But as they've taken on supervisory responsibilities and gained leadership experience, they've

also realized that they, more than so many other people, have qualities that can help give others satisfying and constructive lives.

### *Rewards to the supervisor*

Community work entered into wholeheartedly has many rewarding features – primarily of an intangible nature, it is true, but nonetheless satisfying.

First, the man who takes part in his community undertakings, whether as leader or follower, is serving broader aims and goals in life than mere self – and feeling and being a better man because of it.

Second, he has the opportunity to meet, on an informal and unofficial basis, people from many different walks of life–lawyers, doctors, civic officials, supervisors and executives from other companies, etc. Such contacts do much to broaden a man. He sees how problems are solved in areas other than his daily job. He comes in contact with many different viewpoints. If he is working with a youth group, such as the Boy Scouts, he can't help but be injected with some young ideas, no matter how much his legs may ache after an all-day hike.

Third, in many cases, a man who participates in a local activity and does a good job becomes a better manager in his daily work. The confidence and knowledge he has acquired in his volunteer work rub off on his plant performance. And this extra leadership ability is another asset for management to consider when a promotion is in the offing. There is no doubt that more and more companies are considering a man's community interests when a higher job is open. And for a good reason. No matter what other methods a company uses to achieve good community relations – donations to local charities, open houses, press releases, etc. – the steel-ribbed foundation is still the behavior and attitude of the people who work for the company, from the president down. What they say and do, and their willingness to participate in community enterprises, are the principal factors that mold and shape opinion about a company.

So the man who has proved his ability to assume community responsibilities is a more valuable company spokesman in his home town than a man who hasn't. When two men of equal technical ability and work performance are reviewed for promotion, there is every reason to believe that the scales will be balanced, even if only slightly, in favor of the man who has been active outside.

A while ago I talked at length with a former supervisor, who has since risen to an important position in his

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plant, about his background in community organizations. For more than 14 years this man has been a member of many local clubs, and has participated on a high level in Safety Council, Community Chest, Boy Scout, and YMCA work among others. In personality he is an extrovert – a happy man who enjoys working with people. He said to me:

"A man getting into community work should be willing to start at the bottom in the organization he lines up with. Not everybody can be a chairman. It is better to learn the ropes, and to know what makes the group click, before he allows himself to be assigned to—or pushes himself into – a position of authority. He should, of course, tell his company boss about his activity – not to get credit, but so that his superior understands what he is doing, and knows what nights will be involved. This can save headaches later on.

"No matter what activity a man takes part in, he should never commit his company to anything unless he has checked it thoroughly with his boss, and received a go-ahead from the plant manager, the company treasurer, the public relations director, or whoever would make the decision. He should also be very careful not to give the impression that the company endorses any one particular project unless he knows darned well that it does."

I asked this man what he had gotten out of his years of community work.

"Several things," he said. "First and foremost, I guess, is the personal satisfaction I've had from doing my part. This applies particularly to my work with kids' groups. It's been a really fine experience for me. Second have been the contacts I've made. I guess I now know about all the top people in town. That hasn't hurt me and it hasn't hurt the company any, either. Third, I've learned to become a pretty good speaker. In my plant work, that has come in handy when I've had to conduct employee meetings or say my piece in management meetings. And last, I feel that my outside work has been at least partly responsible for my getting some promotions. You know how it is. The boss has lunch one day with a fellow I've been working with on a committee. This fellow tells my boss I've done a nice job, and so forth. Remember, it isn't *me* telling my boss—it's this other guy—so it makes at least a small impression."

### *From laborer to foreman*

Another foreman we know attributes his promotion from the hourly ranks to the fact that his activity in community enterprises caught the attention of his plant manager. This man put in several years as a laborer in his department. A good athlete, he developed an interest in recreation facilities for youth in his home town. Before long he was made a member of the town's park playground commission. The leadership he showed here made him a marked man for promotion in his company. Later he served on the town's fire commission, and on a special committee to investigate sewage problems in the town.

Both these men were bears for work, but both were smart enough to take on only what they could handle. The vice president for personnel of a large company said about this point:

"We feel that participation in community activities helps develop leadership in a man. His contacts are broadened, he takes on responsibility, he becomes more adept in working with people and in speaking before groups. All these are added feathers on his arrow. However, if he is so active outside that his thinking and interests are diverted from his job, we would not be inclined to place him above another man unless he reduced his outside activity to a nominal amount."

The thinking of this particular executive brings into focus one of the possible pitfalls of community work. Let's assume that Bob Williams, a foreman, becomes interested in Boy Scout work. He has a boy of his own who is just getting started in scouting, and kids being what they are, it isn't long before the "old man" is helping to get a Scout troop organized. In so doing, he meets with other fathers in the same position. One of these men, impressed with the way Bob operates, asks him to fill an empty spot on a YMCA committee. Flattered, Bob accepts. He is now spending two evenings out a week and doing fine. However, Bob's work in the YMCA prompts a well-wisher to ask him to

serve as a Little League umpire. Again, Bob accepts.

Now he is out three nights a week. Mrs. Williams, who is happy that her husband is well enough thought of to merit these requests, still doesn't like the idea of him being out three nights a week. Carrying the case a bit further, Bob now has three organizations to think about, and even worry about, during his waking hours. Unless he is the type of individual who dotes on juggling a number of balls in the air at once, he may very well concentrate so much on his outside affairs that his work suffers.

Does that sound a little far-fetched? Maybe it is, but it sometimes happens. The only answer, according to men who have been through the experience, is to evaluate carefully your time and capabilities. Accept what you honestly believe you can handle. Politely but firmly decline the others.

### *How to get started*

There are, of course, many outlets for the community-minded supervisor. Churches, veterans organizations, Community Chest, Red Cross, Civil Defense, schools, YMCA, Junior Achievement, Little League, Service Clubs—these and many others need capable, dependable, intelligent men and women. Participation in any such group is almost certain to give the willing citizen-supervisor both the personal satisfaction and the broadening experience that comes from outside activities.

The chances are that you will be approached to serve either by a friend already in a group or by an official of an organization. If not, or if you're new in town, the simplest way to get started is simply to volunteer your services. Through your contacts you will undoubtedly have a pretty good idea of the type of group that will fit you best. Each will have a wide range of opportunities to fit your particular talents.

If you are a good inside man, strong on organization, you can serve by helping with the background work that is so vitally needed. If you enjoy contact work—meeting the public—try for that kind of assignment. Or if your day-to-day work involves much paper work, and you want a change of pace after hours, you can very well volunteer for an outside job.

In any case, you'll be welcomed with open arms by the other folks in the organization you select or that selects you, and you'll be pretty sure of getting the inner satisfaction that comes from serving a worth-while cause. At the same time, you'll be making a real contribution to the betterment of your own community. ◆

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A good man likes a hard boss. I don't mean a nagging boss or a grouchy boss. I mean a boss who insists on things being done right and on time; a boss who is watching things closely enough so that he knows a good job from a poor one. Nothing is more discouraging to a good man than a boss who is not on the job, and who does not know whether things are going well or badly.

—William Feather, quoted in *Forbes Magazine of Business and Finance*

**The American Management Association is devoted to management education. This story shows how SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT is a part of this broad educational program for all levels of management**

THE American Management Association (AMA) is a cooperative, nonprofit organization with one primary objective—the development of better management methods through a continuous program of education by management for management. Membership is extended to both companies and individuals. AMA does no lobbying and advances no propaganda. It maintains a strictly "hands off" attitude toward political and other public issues. AMA promotes better management by passing on the experience and knowledge of others through publications, conferences, seminars, and courses.

The basic idea behind AMA is the belief that most people want to do their jobs better, are willing to discuss their problems, and want to hear how other firms have developed more efficient operating methods.

Industry hasn't always been willing to exchange information freely. In the past, many firms didn't want to share their methods and practices. They took a dim view of employee education, and thought that merely exposing a man to a higher job automatically qualified him for it.

But there were some forward-looking men who, as early as 1913, began thinking about the need for scientific-management techniques. Several organizations—the National Association of Corporation Training Schools, the National Association of Employment Managers, and the National Personnel Association—were finally consolidated in 1923, and the AMA was born.

There are eight divisions within the organization, as follows:

***Personnel:*** Here the personnel man studies the latest developments

**Top men in industry are tapped as speakers for AMA conferences held in major cities all over the country. Meetings attract crowds of up to 2,000 members.**

in selection, training, labor relations, pensions, compensation, employee welfare, and similar subjects.

***Office Management:*** The subjects of study here are salary administration, training, selection, office equipment, measurement of output, and forms simplification.

***Manufacturing:*** This division deals with production planning, cost reduction, inventory control, incentives, equipment, plant layout, and time and motion study.

**Smaller groups thrash out specific management problems at AMA seminars.**

***Marketing:*** All phases of industrial and consumer marketing problems, such as market research, pricing, sales policies, promotional methods, and handling sales personnel, are covered.

***Packaging:*** Major events of this division are packaging conferences and expositions. The annual exposition at Atlantic City has become nationally known as the place where all the varied materials, equipment, machines, and services designed for packaging and handling of consumer, industrial, and military goods are assembled.

***Finance:*** Participants in this division exchange information and experiences on budgetary control, taxation, stockholder and investor

relations, depreciation, and obsolescence.

***Insurance:*** This division is primarily a buyers' group—undoubtedly the largest such group in the country—and discussions are conducted mainly from that viewpoint.

***General Management:*** Members of this section study those management problems of prime importance to the over-all administration of business. For example, organization, planning, types of control.

Each division usually holds several conferences, averaging three days each, every year. Specialists are called in from industry by AMA to conduct these meetings, and from 800 to 2,000 members hear current topics or long-term issues discussed. And there are always question-and-answer periods. These meetings take place in hotels in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Cleveland, and Philadelphia.

The divisions also hold smaller, seminar meetings. There are two kinds of these. One is the workshop—small group discussions in which 15 men meet for three days to talk about, and thrash out, a particular management problem under the guidance of a discussion leader who is also from industry. The other kind is the orientation seminar—classlike sessions composed of up to 40 persons and dealing with basic management subjects.

The deep interest of industry in supervisory problems is indicated by the large number of seminars devoted to such topics. Here, for example, are just a few of the seminars held during the past year on subjects related to the foreman and supervisor:

The Supervisor's Role in Labor Relations

Developing and Integrating Foremen into Production Management

The Supervisor's Role in Personnel Administration

**Television is used to give AMA members an inside view of exactly what happens during the play-by-play action of an unrehearsed collective bargaining session.**

Techniques of Supervisory Training

The Supervisor's Role in Cost Reduction

In 1952, AMA started the Management Course. This is a five-day-a-week, four-week review of the basic tools, principles, and skills of management. Usually the president of a company attends first and then sends other key men on his management team. The course is aimed at increasing the skill of the individual as a practicing executive or preparing him for bigger responsibilities.

This year, AMA launched a five-day-a-week, three-week Executive Communication Course. This provides training in making ideas and problems clear, getting them across, and getting participation. Emphasis is on the human elements underlying all kinds of communication rather than on mass media and special devices.

In addition, AMA publishes several magazines. One is *Personnel,* which appears every second month and deals with personnel administration and labor relations. A second is the monthly *Management Review,* which boils down the best in business reading from hundreds of specialized periodicals and publications, and a third is *Management News,* an eight-page monthly which is a combination membership newsletter and research report.

Among AMA's newest activities is the Supervisory Development Services Department. The department conducts special conferences and seminars on supervision. In addition, it provides subscribers with three publications aimed at helping companies initiate a first-line supervisory development program or evaluate a program already in existence. These are (1) *Supervisory Development Today,* which provides companies each month with current information on what other companies are doing in the areas of supervisory selection, compensation, foremen's responsibilities and authority, and supervisory training; (2) a monthly *Sourcebook,* each of which deals with a specific problem, such as cost control, and describes how certain companies successfully dealt with it; and (3) semi-annual research reports on techniques of developing a given phase of supervisory development.

The Supervisory Development Services Department also publishes SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT, thus providing an integrated coverage of the field of supervision.

The continued growth of AMA activities reflects the new willingness of men at all levels of management to search for better and better answers for the problems of business and industry. To help them in that search is the task of the American Management Association. ◆

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When you get right down to the root of the meaning of the word "succeed" you find that it simply means to follow through.

—F. W. Nichol in *Management Briefs* (Rogers, Slade and Hill, New York)

# What Makes a "Good" Foreman?

By Arthur N. Turner

**Workers sound off on what they think makes a good foreman—and what makes a bad one. Here are survey results showing what a foreman should and should not do**

THE importance of the foreman in influencing workers' morale is generally recognized. However, if a foreman is to establish constructive relations with his men as a basis for increased morale and productivity, he has to know how workers want their foreman to behave. What makes a good foreman from the *worker's* point of view? The answers given here are drawn from a survey in one particular plant, but they would seem also to apply to any large-scale manufacturing plant.

In the course of an interview survey of a sample of 202 production workers in a final automobile assembly plant, a number of questions were asked concerning workers' relations with their foreman. Workers' comments on their foremen in these interviews present a clear picture of what a good foreman should and should not do, and what sort of attitudes they feel he should have.

Workers talked less about the technical qualifications of their foremen than about their ability or lack of ability to establish good human relations with the men. In part this was because of the nature of the question which interviewers used to encourage a free discussion of the foreman-worker relationship—"How well does the foreman get along with the men?" Nevertheless, a number of workers did stress the importance of a foreman's "knowing the job," and there

was no doubt that technical competence was important in determining the amount of respect which these workers felt toward their foremen. As one worker put it:

My foreman is the best guy you could ask for. He can do any job in the place. The superintendent is crumby. He don't know nothing about the jobs. You ask him something and he says, "I don't know." That's all he ever says.

To most workers it is important that the foreman be able to perform the jobs of the men he supervises. Most foremen in this plant had been promoted up through the ranks, so their ability to do the jobs in their section was usually taken for granted. In a few cases workers complained bitterly that their particular foreman was not able to do the jobs himself:

At the present time, the foreman we have over us doesn't know anything about the job. He's actually learning from us. Nobody from management has showed me anything. It was always another worker.

One thing you can't stand is when a foreman wants you to do so much when he can't do it himself. How can you work for a man like that? How can you have any respect for his authority? Nothing aggravates you more than to have a guy tell you what to do and know that he can't do a damn thing himself.

What is important to these men is not so much whether the foreman shows a great deal of skill on the jobs (actually, little skill in the usual sense was required by most of the jobs on the assembly line). More important was whether the foreman, through experience, really knew what these jobs were like. Many of these workers, as we shall see, had a keen appreciation and sympathy for the difficulties of the foreman's job. In return, they expected their foreman to show that he understood the difficulties of their jobs, in particular the repetitiveness and the feeling of constant pressure caused by the moving line. In saying that a good foreman should "know the job," the workers mean that he should understand the way things seem from his men's point of view.

### *Too much pressure*

The second point which workers made about how a good foreman should behave was that he should not keep "bothering" them when they're working; he should not keep putting pressure on his men all the time. Workers realized that foremen were responsible for seeing that the work got done. But here again what is important is whether a foreman, in carrying out this responsibility, shows a corresponding understanding of the

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attitudes of his men, or whether his only way of getting them to "keep up with the line" is by trying to increase the pressure.

The foreman we have now, certain fellows don't care for him, but most of them get along pretty good with him. The foreman we had before was pushing the men, giving them more work

than they could handle. That's why they took a dislike to the guy. . . . If they [i.e., the foremen] leave me alone, I'll do my work. But if they pester me, I feel as though it doesn't pay to do a good job.

[My foreman would] stand around sometimes 20 minutes or half an hour watching; sometimes he'd take over to see if he could do the job. He always went in the hole [i.e., failed to keep up with the line]. I'd time him myself, and he'd always go in the hole, but he expected us to do the job. . . . When you first go in, they give you so much work, you get used to it, and build up a few seconds to stand around. The foreman sees you standing around and sticks you with another operation. All the time you want to build up a few seconds' rest, and they want to take it away.

As these comments illustrate, the two points made so far—that a good foreman should know the job and should avoid unnecessary pressure—were closely interrelated. Being pushed by a foreman who can't do the job himself is doubly irritating. When a foreman thoroughly knows the job, his criticism is easier to take. Here is another comment on these same points:

Before I worked at Plant Y, I had a job at X Company. You couldn't work in a better place. The foreman never flipped his lid. He didn't run around like a mad dog. . . . [Here] the time-study men tell you you have plenty to do—too much to do—in fact, we had the "boss" time-study man down. But the foreman says you have to do more. Time study says 12 an hour; the foreman wants 17.

Not only should a foreman avoid unnecessary interference or constant pressure, according to workers, but more important, and more frequently discussed, was the belief that a good foreman should help his men out and stand up for them when they're in trouble. Workers expressed this feeling in many different ways, sometimes in general terms and sometimes by recounting specific examples of a foreman's behavior. In his relationships with his superiors, workers implied, a foreman should be willing "to go out on a limb for his men."

Some of the foremen are no good, but I will say this for my foreman. At least he stands up and fights for his men. You take not long ago when . . . time study came around and said we had two and a half men too much. . . .

Well, my foreman . . . stood up to his general foreman and said if they took the extra men off he was gonna quit. The men stayed on. We didn't forget that.

Another worker told about a foreman who stood up for his men and who wasn't afraid of the general foremen or the superintendent, believing that if he cooperated with the men they would cooperate with him. But according to this worker, "This foreman is not there now. . . . They fixed him because he didn't give a damn about higher supervision."

Whereas some foremen are admired for their readiness to stand up for their men, others are heartily disliked because they "stab you in the back."

[My foreman is] no good. It's the way he operates. He's a real wise guy and will stab you like a flash when you turn your back. Damned smart operator. He even puts a stop watch on the men when they go to the washroom.

Just as a foreman should be willing to go to some trouble for his men in relations with management and supervision, so should he be willing to help his men in adjusting to the other main source of pressure which most workers are conscious of—the pacing of their jobs, especially on the moving line. A foreman can be helpful in relation to the worker's job by providing suitable tools and materials. Some workers pointed out that a foreman is appreciated who is willing to help out by actually doing the work when a worker gets "in the hole."

He [the foreman] doesn't get along at all with the men. He doesn't work with them. He's just a pusher who is afraid of his job. . . . If you've got a man who knows what he's doing, it's all right, but if he shows he doesn't know what is what, how can he help you? I told him what to do, and then he turns around and tells me to do something else. When I give him the tools to do it himself, so that he can show me that his way is easier, he just walks away. He leaves me there to figure it out for myself.

Another worker complained that his foreman would not listen to his reason for having difficulty with the job, but would just tell him to get the job done anyway. He explained that a good foreman will help you when you're in trouble, and that if the foreman will pitch in when the going is rough, the men will do more than they have to, to help the foreman.

### *How much is too much?*

The feeling that a good foreman helps his men out on the job was frequently expressed in our interviews. But this did not mean that foremen should *regularly* work "on the line." By the terms of the union contract, foremen were not supposed to work except in emergencies or when training a new employee on the job. Upper management tried hard to enforce this rule against foremen working. Some workers bitterly criticized their foreman for working.

My brother-in-law can't eat any more, he's on the rocks from that place. There used to be five drivers, now there's three. This three does the same work, but of course the foremen help.

It's a crime. There's supposed to be a contract, but there is no contract. The foremen and supervisors all come down there and run cars off the line. Yesterday we all signed a petition in our bunch and gave it to the committeeman because the foreman was working. He [foreman] stopped. They got no busi-

ness putting a worker out of a job by working.

Right now there are no men out in our department and yet our foreman works like a slave so we can keep up. And he's not supposed to work except in an emergency. Emergency—that's a laugh! That's an excuse to let the foreman work. We always got emergencies. . . . We want somebody [as a foreman] there who's not supposed to work, that's who we want!

Most workers would agree that when foremen by working seem to be depriving workers of a job, the contract is being violated. But a foreman who works occasionally to help his men out is usually seen as being helpful. The distinction is a fine one in many cases. Whether a foreman who works occasionally is seen by the men as helpful or as violating the contract undoubtedly depends not only upon the duration and frequency of the incidents when he works, but also upon the attitudes which workers and foreman already hold toward each other, as a result of a whole complex of previous experiences.

### *Playing favorites*

In addition to being "helpful," most workers agree that a good foreman is fair and friendly; in other words that he avoids showing favoritism or acting "high-hat." In particular he should not be "sneaky." These characteristics were not discussed as frequently in our interviews as might be expected. However, they are obviously important to most workers, as the following comments illustrate.

Oh yeah, sure [the foreman gets along with the men], and we get along with the foreman, too. We like the foreman. . . . He's friendly—one of the friendliest in the plant.

[My foreman is] the kind of man that likes certain fellows and will listen to them, and doesn't like others, so pays no attention to them. He doesn't want to know nothing—you just do it.

[My foreman gets along] not so well. Reason is that a little knowledge is dangerous. He has very little, and he tries to be very superior. As a boss, maybe he has some superiority over his men, but as a man, he shouldn't. . . . He keeps the men pegged. He knows who he can buffalo and who he can't.

The foreman we have now is a man who is not generally liked. He does sneaky things once in a while. He thinks he's a time-study expert. He does time-and-motion study with a wrist watch,

he's so clever. He doesn't need a calibrated chart and a stop watch. That's for sissies.

When workers say that a good foreman is "fair" or "friendly," it is not always clear exactly what they mean. In our interviews, many workers probed more deeply into what in fact a foreman should do and the attitude toward his men that he should have. These workers stressed in particular that a foreman should understand his men's point of view. They frequently told of incidents which implied that a foreman should recognize the way his men felt about things, and should relate himself to his men in terms of their feelings and attitudes. Sometimes they said specifically that a good foreman listens to his men and asks their advice.

The foreman comes over and tells us how to do it, and then he asks us, "How is it going? Is it all right? Is it hard? Can there be any improvement?" . . . Suppose you want to go upstairs to the lavatory. If [the foreman is] a crab, he makes you wait half an hour, and you wait and wait. Some are just lousy jerks, just good-for-nothings. That means a lot. The men on the line appreciate a man who'll do things for them.

When there's a model change, the foreman is as much in the dark as we are, but we talk it over and figure out the best way to do it. He's open to suggestions. You can talk to him any time. . . . [Our present foreman gets along with the men] a lot better than most of the foremen there. . . . If you like a foreman, he gets cooperation. If you don't like a foreman, he gets obedience —or else you get suspended.

These workers imply that the fact that their foreman pays attention to their ideas and points of view inclines them to do better work for him than if he refused to "listen to your side of the story." They feel fortunate that their own foreman stands out in this respect from others in the plant. This opinion is amply reinforced by the many other workers who bitterly complain that their foremen do not show this same degree of understanding.

The average foreman in that plant is an I-know-it-all guy. We've had foremen that realize that they never were on the motor line, and they'll talk it over with you, but that's one in every hundred. . . . [My present foreman] don't know how to approach the men, don't know how to talk with them. He's got the attitude of an I-know-it-all guy. . . . Yes, definitely [the foreman makes a difference]. It also shows up in the quality of the work. If he's a pretty good guy, you try to protect his job, or you try to do it a little bit better.

You can't tell [my foreman] a thing. . . . He never showed me anything. He

don't have to. I can find out for myself. [I try to help the foreman out] but he don't appreciate a damn thing you do. So how can you take an interest in your job? Everyone in there wants to, but they can't. If they would pat you on the back once in a while, it makes you feel good and you work harder. . . . Sometimes we go a week without talking. Sometimes he talks to me because he has to. Him and me don't get along at all. Just so he doesn't bother me, I'm all right. . . . He don't know how to use his head. . . . But he must be a good man. He's been on supervision since '37-'39. Maybe the company don't know about him.

It is striking how often workers stress that they do better work for a foreman who is sympathetic with their problems and shows a real

understanding of their points of view. The last worker quoted went on to say that the kind of man the foreman was made a lot of difference. According to him, if the foreman has the proper attitude, it takes the strain off the men and they do better work. He said that when the foreman was out for half a day, there was a noticeable improvement in the quality of the work. The department superintendent noticed the difference, and asked the worker about it. The worker told him it must be the weather, because he didn't want to say anything about the foreman, but in his own mind he was convinced that the men were working better because the foreman was absent.

Many workers have similar examples to relate. In saying that a foreman should be understanding, should recognize his men's feelings and listen to them, workers did not mean that they liked such a foreman because they did not have to do as much work for him. On the contrary, they usually made the point that they worked harder and more effectively for the foreman who was willing to listen to them and ask their advice. Considering the extent to which intrinsic job interest has been engineered out of most assembly line jobs, it should not be surprising if the foreman is most successful who understands how his men feel about their work and who consciously respects their opinions and brings them in on decisions concerning how the job should be done.

Finally, there are three types of foreman behavior that are specifically resented. These criticisms differ from those given so far, in that they are specific illustrations of more general attitudes. Usually workers do not only criticize or praise their foremen in general terms. Often they point to specific instances of interaction with foremen which determine or illustrate the quality of the foreman-worker relationship.

Among the specific criticisms of foremen who were disliked, three are especially important, not only because they were mentioned with surprising frequency, but also because they seem especially pertinent to the particular mass-production environment in an automobile assembly plant. The three criticisms can be summed up by saying that in particular, according to the men we interviewed, a foreman should not let his authority "go to his head," he should not keep you from going to the hospital when you are sick or injured, and he should never say, "If you don't like it here, why don't you quit?"

The first of these points applies especially to new foremen. Workers bit-

terly resent it when a foreman completely changes his attitude toward his former fellow workers as soon as he is promoted.

> The foreman takes it out on you. I've seen old friends [i.e., foremen] turn to dogs. My foreman, Dave, used to work alongside of me; you wouldn't know he once was a worker like me.... [I talk with him] very seldom—only if I want something, like relief. Never anything personal like "remember the old days, Dave?" and that sort of stuff.... Ours is only a small line—about 18 jobs on it—and Dave makes sure there aren't any gaps. He doesn't have time to get along with the men; he went out this week sick—he's a wreck. They [i.e., the foremen] don't give a damn what they do. They knife you all the time. I would never take a foreman's job. I got a reprimand from Dave, and I told him he was wrong. He said he knew it, but was told by his boss that he was to put down a reprimand for the record! [Dave told me this] unofficially and off the record —which means he had to lie in my case. When I made a grievance out of it, sure enough, Dave lied.... Inside of me I can't see a man be so low to push other men around like that. I know for a fact it's because of pressure from the top down. They're [i.e., the foremen] taught to be tough.

### *Little job interest*

Most assembly line workers have little interest in their jobs; many of them actively dislike their work, especially the constant pressure of the moving line. Often "management" seems to them like an impersonal force, uninterested in them as individuals, preventing them from doing things they like, depriving them of full expression—in short, a second source of unwelcome pressure. Therefore, a "good" foreman, from these workers' points of view, is a source of help and protection from management.

When workers' goals are sharply differentiated from managements' goals, a foreman who identifies him-

self too readily with managements' objectives, as workers conceive these objectives, is resented. Workers who complain that their foreman's newfound authority has "gone to his head" are implying that they resent having a foreman act too much like "management" just because he has been made a foreman. Some workers were bitterly surprised at the ways in which a man they had worked with had "changed" upon being made a foreman.

In Company Y it was largely because of the external pressures imposed by the technology of the moving assembly line and by management (the agent responsible for these pressures) that most workers perceived and resented these changes in behavior so acutely.

### *They hand you a Band-Aid*

In the same way, the technological environment was responsible for the large number of complaints about foremen refusing to let a man who was sick or injured go to the hospital. Before explaining why this was so, here are three examples of these complaints.

> We got four foremen. They all get on fair. Pretty slow on a hospital pass, though. When you cut your finger on something and yell for relief, he hands you a Band-Aid. You could bleed to death before you get relief. He hopes you'll forget it by the time it takes to bring the relief man over. Same thing with a cold or headache. Foreman hands you an aspirin. Sometimes you got a cramp and want relief. It takes them so long to bring a relief man over, you gotta just drop your tools and go.

> Rather than send you to the hospital, the foremen keep aspirin in their lockers and give them to you if you say you don't feel too good. . . . I know another foreman who used to keep Band-Aids in his pocket for you if you got cut—he didn't want you going to the hospital. I got hit on the head a couple of days ago—something fell from the ceiling. It was about 3:30 when it happened and I was a little dizzy, but I didn't say anything because my foreman wouldn't let me go anyway. . . . So when I came in the next day, I told the foreman I had to get relief at 9 o'clock to go to the hospital. . . . I didn't get to the hospital until 4 o'clock because the son of a gun didn't get me any relief.

> Oh, yes, another thing. You get this down, because it isn't often we've got a chance to sound off like this. The foremen have Band-Aids. When a man gets a cut, the foreman treats them to a Band-Aid. Actually, the foremen go against the contract every time they do that, because they can't refuse a man a trip to the hospital.

### *A general discontent*

Whether these incidents actually occurred as workers reported them is not the point. As the last comment illustrates, workers often seize upon some such "violation of the contract" to dramatize their general feeling of irritation against an environment and a management that seems to them impersonal and uninterested in their problems. "It isn't often we've got a chance to sound off like this." It appears that given the chance to "sound off," many workers recalled and perhaps embellished incidents which allegedly involved refusal of relief to go to the hospital, because such incidents illustrated so vividly the gen-

eral feeling of discontent that these workers wanted to express.

In addition to absenteeism, a major problem in many mass-production plants is turnover, especially among new hires. Constant turnover makes the foreman's job much more difficult. Management, recognizing this, is interested in persuading workers not to leave. Therefore, it was especially striking that a number of workers in our study claimed that management, or more specifically the foreman, expressed the attitude, "If you don't like it here, why don't you quit?" One worker, for instance, told of asking his foreman to be excused from Saturday overtime work because his mother was visiting him for the weekend. His foreman's response was "You have a job with Company Y, and if you don't do it, there's plenty outside who will." Here are some other examples:

> [The foremen] don't treat the employees like human beings.... My foreman told me recently, "If you can't keep up with the job, why don't you quit? There's plenty of others outside waiting..." I don't think that's the company policy. I don't think [the corporation president] would like that, because he's pretty old himself.

> The company don't care about the men and does nothing for them. Because I asked to be changed to a different department and I asked for a break, they ignored me. Nobody gets a break in there. They have their own motto, "Production," and that's all that counts. If the man can't do it, they tell him,

**"Have you seen the new foreman yet? You can't miss the silly-looking beanpole—must be nine feet tall."**

"Well, we'll get somebody else." The work wouldn't be bad if management would treat the men like human beings instead of like mules. If they'd talk to the men once in a while—but they don't. They don't care about the old fellows. They want new blood....They just say, "If you don't want to do the job, we'll get somebody else."

The foreman says the company's paying for eight hours and they want the eight hours out of you. Another one of their favorite expressions is "If you don't like the job, quit."...I don't think it's the [fault of the] company. It's the men who run it, the foreman and the superintendent.

If foremen are going to help decrease the costs of high turnover, and to keep all their jobs filled with men who can keep up with the line, it is important for them to discourage their men from leaving. Yet sometimes pressures are exerted on foremen that lead them to act in ways which increase turnover, instead of decreasing it. Especially on an assembly line, foremen are forced to deal with workers' complaints about their jobs and to induce workers to perform quickly and constantly work which many of them find highly distasteful. In this situation, it is possible to understand why a foreman might say to a worker who complains, "If you don't like it here, why don't you quit?"

Understandable or not from the foremen's point of view, to a worker such a statement, and the attitude behind it, certainly does not impress him with management's desire to discourage him from leaving the company. Thus, because of various pressures, many of them derived from the technology of the moving line, some foremen can find themselves caught in a vicious circle. By increasing workers' feeling of being "not wanted," they encourage rather than discourage the high absenteeism, turnover, and dissatisfaction that contribute to the pressures and lack of time which make foremen act that way in the first place.

### *A summing up*

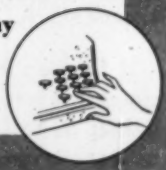
These automobile assembly workers showed remarkable agreement as to the kind of behavior that makes a "good" foreman from their point of view. They said a good foreman should:

- Have competent technical knowledge about his job, and be familiar with the work performed in his section.
- Avoid the use of constant and unnecessary "pressure" in dealing with his men.
- Back his men up in relations with higher management, and be willing to help out on the job by *temporarily* performing the work himself when necessary.
- Avoid acting high-hat or playing favorites.
- Understand his men's points of view, recognize how they feel, listen to them, and ask their advice.
- Avoid three specific kinds of disliked behavior: letting new-found authority go to his head, denying a sick or injured worker relief to go to the hospital, and making statements such as "If you don't like it here, why don't you quit?" ◆

# Work Sampling in Action

By Chester Brisley

**Wasted manpower, time, and money show up clearly when the workday is sampled. Here's how one company got results from this method**



IT's Monday afternoon. The coaches and players are huddled in a small darkened room watching a movie of Saturday's game. Suddenly the projector is stopped, freezing a moment of action.

The head coach moves to the screen, shows where a key block was missed, points out why the fake handoff didn't fool anyone.

This routine is standard practice at most colleges during football season. And in some ways it's similar to the work sampling studies used in industry.

The purpose of work sampling is to reduce costs by finding out which operations are inefficient. If the studies are successful, they give supervisors a clue as to where time is being wasted and which operating routines need to be changed. They can also be used by supervisors to get an unbiased slant on which workers are going all out, which ones are just going through the motions.

Work sampling got its start in England, about 1927, when L. H. C. Tippett, of the British Cotton Industry Research Association, was making a survey of weaving sheds to discover the causes and lengths of loom stoppages.

At first he timed the looms with a stop watch, but because he could only observe two or three looms at a time, he had to move around the shed a great deal and study many looms before he could reach a fairly reliable average.

One day a weaving manager said to him, "I can tell at a glance whether

the weaving in the shed is good. If most of the weavers are bent over their looms mending warp breaks, weaving is bad; if the weavers are mostly watching running looms, weaving is good."

At that moment, Tippett got an idea. He realized that a snapshot of the looms taken at any moment would be an indication of the rate of production in a short interval surrounding that moment and the losses in output due to various causes.

From further study he realized that it was usually safe to generalize from these snapshot samplings. In other words, if the looms were running when 50 per cent of the snapshots were taken during one day, it could be assumed that the looms had actually been running only one half of the entire day. On the other hand, if one half of the snapshots during a given day showed the weavers mending warp breaks, it was safe to say that the looms had not been running during half of that day.

Tippett called this method snap-reading. He published his discovery in 1935. Professor Robert Lee Morrow, of New York University, introduced Tippett's technique in this country in 1940 before the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. As a result, variations of the snapshot technique have been worked out and applied by many companies here in America. One of these variations involves ringing bells throughout an office at certain times during the course of a day. This bell method is one that we have used at Wolverine Tube. Here is how it works.

### *There goes the bell*

A bell is rung and all activity in a certain department is noted. Employees write down whatever they were doing when the bell went off. By making these observations every day at irregular intervals over a period of several weeks, we have been able to get a pretty good idea of how the time for each job is being spent.

In effect, we take a series of snapshots of our plant in operation. By studying them we're able to find out where the key blocks are being missed.

After completing a work sampling study, employees are asked to make suggestions on how their jobs can be streamlined on the basis of the facts discovered in the tests. These recommendations have resulted in many important improvements at our plant.

Stripped to its essentials, here's how a work sampling study is made:

The job is broken down into its basic steps. For example, these might be setting up the machine, waiting for parts, machine in operation, personal time for the operator.

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**Mr. Brisley is Industrial Engineering Manager of Wolverine Tube, a Division of Calumet & Hecla, Inc., Detroit, manufacturer of ferrous and nonferrous tubing. He received a B.S. in Industrial Engineering at Youngstown College in 1946, and an M.S. in Industrial Engineering at Wayne University in 1954. He was formerly President and National Director of the Society for the Advancement of Management, Detroit Chapter.**

Spot observations are made at random intervals during the day, and what is happening at the moment of each spot check is marked down on an observation sheet.

If 40 observations are made during an 8-hour workday, the results might show up like this:

During 10 of the 40 spot checks, the machine was being set up. This means 25 per cent of the time is used for this activity.

Twenty-four observations (60 per cent of the total) were made when the machine was in operation. During 4 spot checks (10 per cent of the total) the operator was waiting for parts, and twice (5 per cent of the total) the "personal time" column was checked.

Assuming 40 observations are sufficient to give a fair sample of what's happening on this particular job, the study shows that since setup requires 25 per cent of the time, during an 8-hour workday this operation takes a total of 2 hours. Of the remaining 6 hours, the machine is in operation 4 hours and 48 minutes, the operator waits for parts 48 minutes, and personal time takes 24 minutes.

In actual practice, of course, a great many machines would be covered in the study, and the tests would be carried out over a much longer period of time.

### *Work sampling—office workers*

One of the first work sampling studies we made was of our clerical and supervisory personnel. The first step was to have each employee make up a detailed observation sheet listing all the important steps in his job. These were reviewed by the immediate supervisor in the department to make certain that every function of each job was listed on the observation sheet. Included were such things as:

Receiving instructions
Discussions in department
Calculate, extend, and total
Prepare mailings
Revise card system
Type invoices
Sort invoices
Answer telephone
Personal
Absent

Two bells, one at each end of the office, to make certain everyone would hear them, were set up to go off at random intervals during the day. The bells were operated through a punched tape on the master time clock. When the bells sounded, each worker marked down on his observation sheet whatever he was doing at the moment.

Since the bells went off 30 times a day, workers with less than 30 check marks on their observation sheets knew how many absent periods to mark down.

When the 5-week work sampling study was over, each employee was asked to make suggestions on how his job could be made more efficient. These recommendations were discussed with the supervisor.

Typical of the benefits that can be gained from work sampling are the improvements we made after a similar study of our industrial engineering department. Examples:

1. Bicycles were purchased to cut down the time needed to get around the plant.

2. Dictating machines were put in to reduce clerical time.

3. The filing system was revamped to make it easier to dig out information.

4. Additional telephone extensions were installed.

5. A uniform method of using symbols and dimensions on drawings was put into effect.

In making these work sampling studies among office workers, we found that the effectiveness of the employees' suggestions depends greatly on the interest and enthusiasm the supervisor shows in the sampling studies made on his own job.

We also learned that with certain jobs, such as that of supervisor, it's better to use an observer rather than having the individual jot down what he's doing every time the bell goes off. In this way the supervisor is not interrupted continually while in meetings or talking to visitors.

No system is perfect, and of course we found some bugs in our particular method of work sampling. The main drawbacks are the frequent work interruptions, and the fact that much of the information we obtained depended on how honestly the workers filled in their observation sheets.

In general, however, we've found that work sampling has been a tremendous help. We've received valuable suggestions on how to improve our plant operations, and our workers have had a chance to be judged on their own record in face-to-face discussions with their supervisors.

We've found there are fewer misunderstandings about what's expected on a given job, and we've been able to cut out a lot of duplicated work. Most important, work sampling has helped us cut costs. ◆

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## Electronic Loafing Exposed

Automatic machines were enjoying an unusually good press until John Vavasour, a General Electric auditor, came along.

Vavasour had a hunch that automatic machines—like humans—have a way of looking busy when they're not. To test his theory he borrowed a laboratory recording instrument and tied it into the power lines feeding various tabulating machines. Sure enough. The graphs from the recorder showed that machines which seemed to be busy all the time were actually often idle.

According to GE, this machine-age goldbricking was most apparent during operations involving several different kinds of machines performing different tasks. Some worked quickly, then "rested," waiting for others to catch up.

Until this experiment, records based upon the best possible human observation showed 100 per cent machine utilization and the need for more machines. Now operators no longer have to keep an eye on what the GE News Bureau calls "sly mechanical culprits." Scientific rescheduling of work has made it possible to boost output without new machines.

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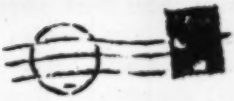
# THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDES:

## an open letter

*By Erwin H. Schell*



To Every XV Man

EDITOR'S NOTE: Since 1924, Professor Schell has been writing letters to the graduates of his course in Business and Engineering Administration (Course XV), at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, to stimulate their thinking by exploring with them ways of achieving fuller and richer lives. In this letter, sent to his 3,300 graduates, he discusses one reason why ability may or may not lead to success. Adapted, by permission, from *The Million Dollar Lecture*, by E. H. Schell. Copyright, 1952. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

To Every XV Man:

At a university commencement several years ago, the dean said to the class, "Unfortunately, there seems to be too little connection between winning prizes in college and later success in life. We do not yet know how to predetermine those qualities that tend to make a man highly successful. Perhaps some time in the future this mystery will be solved."

I wonder if this missing link between ability and achievement may not be one basic human quality — namely, the spirit, or attitude, that underlies our efforts.

***Have attitudes always been important?***

I think so. The salute is said to have started in early medieval days, when soldiers wore coats of mail and helmets covering their faces. As they passed one another, each man would knock the visor to the top of his helmet, so that the other could see his eyes and facial expression — not to identify him, since his coat of arms appeared on his shield, but to sense whether his attitude was friendly or hostile.

***Can our loyalties shape our attitudes?***

A traffic officer on Fifth Avenue in New York City abruptly slowed heavy traffic, causing a truck to smash into the car before it.

The officer went back to the truck, got out his notebook, and said to the driver, "And who might you be, and where might you come from?"

The driver replied, "I am Patrick O'Flaherty, and I come from County Cork."

The officer then turned on his heel, walked up to the driver of the car, and said, "And why, begorrah, should you back your car up into the man behinst you?"

***Can our affections influence our attitudes?***

At the close of World War II, a large English company asked each member of the personnel department to select a recently married male employee from the payroll roster, visit his home, and help him to become adjusted to his community. One personnel man discovered his choice living in very dilapidated quarters. The young couple told him they had no desire to become part of their present community, but they'd be glad of his help if they could only find a decent neighborhood to live in.

This was something of a stumper, since lower-income housing was hard to come by in postwar London. Re-

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**Professor Schell was a member of the faculty of Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1917 to 1955, when he retired and became Lecturer Emeritus. He has been retained as Consultant to the Department of State, and has undertaken special missions to Europe on behalf of the United States Government. Among other awards, he has received the Gilbreth Medal for an outstanding contribution to the field of industrial engineering and management, and the Wallace Clark Award, established to honor distinguished contribution to scientific management in the international field. His best-known book is *Technique of Executive Control*.**

fusing to be daunted, however, the personnel man put this ad in the London *Times:* "Wanted, a small and inexpensive flat near Hampstead for a young married couple. Will shoot dog if necessary."

The next morning's mail brought 21 letters, each saying in substance, "We think we have quarters that may be of interest to you. Please get in touch with us immediately. But for God's sake, don't shoot the dog!"

***Can self-interest affect our attitudes?***

To conserve material during the last war, the Government introduced a Controlled Materials Plan. Some New England industrialists were irritated by the additional routines and controls essential to this plan, and called an indignation meeting. At first, tempers were high and dissatisfaction widespread.Then an old and shrewd manufacturer remarked, "Well, after all, this control plan is a pretty good idea. No one wants a lot of inventory on hand if the war should suddenly end, and perhaps this is one way of keeping inventories at an absolute minimum." The word spread rapidly, and with it came a complete reversal in attitude.

***Can the situations we face influence our attitudes?***

When I was about 28 years old, I was appointed treasurer of an old and highly respected New England company. I discovered it was in extremely bad financial condition, and had borrowed considerable sums of money from its own employees. When I visited the manufacturing plant, I was careful to maintain an attitude of unusual cordiality and friendliness. I remember being quite anxious that we should have no labor trouble, and I know my attitude was affected by our acute financial situation.

***Do our attitudes always depend upon reason?***

I am afraid not. Most of you have doubtless heard me tell of the Irishman who said, "I don't like lettuce salad and I'm glad I don't like it because if I did like it I might eat some of the miserable stuff!"

***Can we consciously condition our attitudes?***

It seems possible. I remember reading of someone who said, "No man can make me hate him. I will not allow hatred in any form to find room in my scheme of things."

***Are attitudes important in operating a business?***

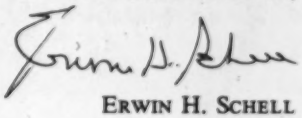
Since starting this letter, I came across the proceedings of a round table of company presidents. During the discussion, Cecil Dawson, President of the Dixie Cup Company, commented: "To me, employee relations, stockholder relations, community relations, customer relations, have a definite similarity in their basis of approach. . . . I think it is probably the attitude of mind of the management of the business—from the board of directors, through the president, right on down—that will determine whether the policies and the attitudes

toward people in these respective groups are going to be good. The degree of good relations will depend first on the degree of merit of the purpose and intent of the policies that are in effect."

***Why do I write to you about these ideas?***

I am convinced that we should examine our own attitudes, their origin, their current nature, and their probable influence upon our own effectiveness. If by any chance it is our attitude that most significantly affects our accomplishments and ensuing satisfactions, then we have discovered a basic principle which may guide us toward a more effective and enjoyable way of life. Competence plus right attitude spells accomplishment.

Yours for the future,



ERWIN H. SCHELL

## Seeing American Industry Through European Eyes

I am beginning to feel that the one thing we visitors may have learned from our year with American industry is to look at problems as though, right from the beginning, they could be solved. We saw so many examples of determination overcoming really difficult obstacles that I felt stimulated just by seeing them.

One project in particular is the 1,400-mile pipeline from southern Texas to Chicago. Right from the first discussion, there was no question about whether it *could* be done; it was just how *soon*.

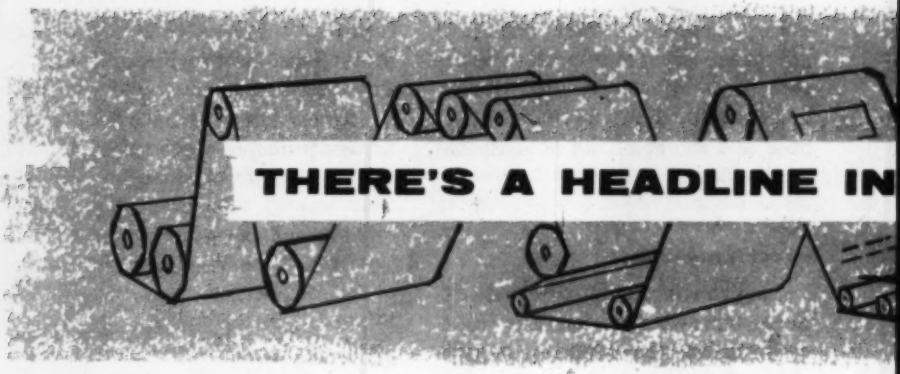
Sometimes over here we are too much inclined to say, "This is a tough one," and leave it at that. That was about the only thing I *didn't* see in America.

—From a letter from a European visitor to J. O. Rice, Administrative Vice President, AMA.

## How to Deal with the Handicapped Worker

How should a supervisor treat a worker who has a physical handicap of some sort? Should he go out of his way to give the worker special treatment, to handle him differently from the rest of his workers? No, says the New York Institute for the Crippled and Disabled. Instead, they make the following suggestions:

1. Accept the handicapped person on the same basis as the nonhandicapped. Treat him exactly the same as other employees as far as personal relations, training, standards of behavior, and standards of accomplishment are concerned.
2. Don't evaluate the handicapped person in terms of his "cheerfulness."
3. Tell the truth to handicapped people. They may be *better* able to take hard truths than "normal" people.
4. When a good relationship has been established, don't be afraid to discuss the person's handicap with him as it affects his job.



# THERE'S A HEADLINE IN

*By Audrey Heusser*

**Somewhere among your workers is a story for the company publication. And it can pay surprising dividends in group loyalty**

For a long time editors of company magazines and newspapers have realized there's a tie-in between morale in a given department and the number of contributions that department makes to the company house organ.

At first it seemed that a department submitted material for the company publication because its morale was high. But now editors of these publications are beginning to believe the reverse may also be true: a department's morale rises as it shows more interest in the company house organ. At any rate, there does seem to be a connection between the two.

More and more, research into human relations is showing that high group loyalty tends to influence performance and production at all levels of management. And certainly news about a department in the company house organ is one way to make workers proud of themselves, their department, and their supervisor. So the supervisor who overlooks his company publication may be making a mistake.

Here's how a supervisor can go about making his company house organ work for him and his department:

If a department has a volunteer house-organ reporter, the supervisor should make certain this employee knows he has his supervisor's support. If the department doesn't have a reporter, the supervisor should ask the house-organ editor to assign one and should help the editor make his selection.

If this still can't be worked out, the supervisor can go to the house-

organ editor and tell him quite frankly that he wants to get news about his department into the publication. The editor, always interested in news, is usually very willing to cooperate and give suggestions.

One of the hardest jobs connected with getting news about a department into a company publication is finding the news, but it's there if you look for it. Here are a few story ideas a supervisor can think about:

*1. Safety.* How long has it been since there was an accident? How much has the department's safety record improved in the last few years? Why are the employees in a certain department safer workers than others?

In one case, a plant editor noticed that although several workers had suffered hernias, none had occurred in the warehouse, where most of the work involved lifting and shifting material. The follow-up was a safety story pegged on the theme "Learn to lift like an expert," with pictures of warehouse workers in action. In stories like this, it's usually best to show how a job should be done. If illustrations are used showing both the right and the wrong way to do a job, there's a good chance a worker will remember the wrong method rather than the right one.

*2. Suggestion system.* Stories about awards to employees for suggestions on improving operations can

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be developed almost any time. The slant might be the amount of money or the number of man-hours saved by changes suggested by workers from a certain department over the past several years. Another possibility: How many awards have been given to one department during the last year?

***3. Production achievements.*** Has a department's scrap or reject record improved? Has a difficult delivery recently been completed on time?

In one company a very large piece of equipment had to be moved by the machine shop from the production area to the machine shop for regrinding. A story was written for the company publication explaining how a wall had to be smashed through to move the machine. It was an interesting article and gave the men in the machine shop a definite feeling of pride in their job.

The maintenance department often gets less credit for the job it does than other departments because its work isn't directly connected with the finished product. But maintenance workers handle many interesting jobs, and certainly this department is worth checking regularly for story possibilities.

Clerical employees are sometimes low producers because their work seems unimportant. One house-organ editor recently ran a story on "People Who Count," explaining the work done by the clerical staff. It gave a group that is frequently ignored a real boost.

***4. Attendance.*** Sometimes a glance at the attendance record of a certain department provides a story idea. It doesn't even have to be a spectacular record to make interesting reading. Just multiplying the number of hours in the workweek dramatizes the figures: "Only 10 lost hours in 80,000 man-hours of production" sounds extremely impressive.

***5. Special Jobs.*** Are there any special skills that set workers in a certain department apart?

One story recently appeared in a company house organ describing how a machine designed in the plant was built by plant machinists and toolmakers, wired by plant electricians, and moved to its permanent location by the plant maintenance crew. When the machine was in place a picture was taken for the house organ of all the men who had worked on it. In this way the morale of nearly 50 workers was given a definite lift.

The supervisor who decides to use the company publication as an aid to group loyalty and production can't expect to see favorable results just because one article about his department appeared in print. The one-shot approach doesn't accomplish very much; boosting morale through use of the company house organ requires continuous effort. ♦

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**In all human activities, particularly in all matters of business, times of stress and difficulty are seasons of opportunity when the seeds of progress are sown.**

**—Thomas F. Woodcock, quoted in *Management Digest***

# MOST PEOPLE LIKE TO WORK

*By Lynn E. Castle*

**Under certain conditions men work hard —and enjoy it. Supervisors can do much to create these conditions**

GETTING things done through people is the task of management. That task is made easier by capitalizing on the fact that most people really like to work. Here are specific examples of favorable work atmosphere:

1. *People like to work at something they can call their own.* A landlord knows how hard it is to get a renter to take an interest in keeping a house in repair or doing anything constructive to the property. But the tired home owner will knock himself out painting a room or building a back-yard fireplace over the weekend. An enthusiastic supervisor talks about "my department." The old-timer who is a dependable worker fusses about "my tools" or "my machine." This pride of ownership applies not only to tools and machines and other tangibles but also to ideas.

2. *People like to work at tasks they have set for themselves.* Everyone likes to "do it my way," and the supervisor who can let people use their heads reaps a rich return in performance. When garment workers at the Harwood Manufacturing Company, in New York City, were permitted to set production goals for themselves, they set them 30 per cent higher than management had dared suggest. Furthermore, they met them.

Setting one's own tasks is espe-

cially pleasant if one is not interrupted constantly by someone else's demands. You have probably heard workers with no enthusiasm for a job say, "What's the use? About the time we get started, the boss will drag us off on another job, and we'll have to start over from the beginning when we get back."

3. *People like to work when they can see what they've done.* On a certain assembly job, a girl makes small parts and drops them down a chute. A motion engineer proved she could make more parts if she dropped them in a hole instead of letting them pile up. But every now and then she catches one, lays it out on the bench, and looks at it. And she checks the counter every few minutes. Those are the only ways she has left to see what she has done.

In many places production jobs are no longer being broken down into such finely specialized operations as they used to be. The trend is toward job enlargement. In one company where 16 operators around a conveyor used to assemble a typewriter, three men now put the whole thing together with greater enthusiasm. And they turn out more typewriters per man than the old assembly line did.

4. *People like to work when they feel their job is important.* High quality standards make a job seem more important. During World War II, when millions of workers were being taught new jobs, the four-step training method was taught to thousands of foremen. Some foremen hesitated to use it. They said the jobs were so simple that a worker could pick them up in a day or two just watching another man. Why, they asked, should we go through this rigmarole? But others saw that even on a simple job, this systematic instruction in the "right way" to do the job gave it dignity and importance. Such instruction took the job out of the class of work that anybody could do and made it something that had to be done right. As one janitress said of her supervisor, "Moppin' ain't just moppin' when you work for Miss Lucy." Workers may sometimes complain that their bosses are hard to please. But there's a certain pride in their statement, "When you get an O.K. from *my* boss, you know you've done a good job."

Many of us like to know that our job is associated with important functions within the organization. For instance, an accountant often works harder because he sees himself as guardian of the organization's financial position. Others like to work when they are in contact with important people or get recognition

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from a large number of people. Contrary to popular opinion, many people near the top in business and industry work harder and put in longer hours than the rest of us.

**5.** *People like to work when they feel secure.* They need the peace of mind that comes with a regular pay check. They like to know that their work will be steady, that no one will fire them or lay them off without a sound reason. If Dick on the assembly line feels that his supervisor plays favorites, or makes one kind of decision when he's in a bad mood and another kind when he's feeling cheerful, Dick's not going to feel secure enough to enjoy his work.

**6.** *Some people like to work at a fast and furious pace.* Obviously, this doesn't apply to everybody. But certain people like to be in the thick of things. They want a job where anything can happen, where there are endless demands on their time and attention. But this requirement must be built into the job and recognized. Some men actually enjoy having three telephones on their desk, all ringing at once. Trouble-shooting types of jobs probably come under this heading. Some men relish tackling a situation where things are all snarled up and only *they* can fix it. The solution of such problems yields them a tremendous satisfaction.

**7.** *Many people like to work where the outcome is in doubt.* They like the element of competition with other men or other organizations. Few people work harder than a salesman out in his territory up against competition, or a whole group of men who are trying to beat a production record set by another department.

**8.** *People like to work at something useful.* Among the bitterest of all facts a man eventually has to face is that the working world no longer has use for anything he can do. The oldsters who no longer have a job invent tasks that someone may find useful or commendable, or at least that they may feel are worth doing for their own sake. One of the real problems of this century is to find genuine ways for the youth and the aged to do useful work in a world where automation and technical complexity are changing the nature of most of the work there is to do.

Properly combine the above conditions, keeping individual differences in mind, and you have a setting in which people work with zeal and effectiveness. So a challenging goal is to discover or create some or all of these ingredients in the jobs we supervise. How can we keep out of a man's way, for example, and stop spoiling his fun whenever he tackles a job that makes him *like* to work?

The above conditions favorable to work do not in any sense overlook the fact that people also like to work for money. Adequate pay certainly helps people enjoy their work more. But most people enjoy their work in ways that are not related directly to the check that they receive at the end of the week or month.

People, by and large, like to work. It's amazing how we can capitalize on that liking. ♦

# GRIEVANCES are BAROMETERS

*By James Menzies Black**

**A supervisor's skill with people is judged to a large degree by the wisdom with which he handles employee complaints**

How well are you carrying out your grievance responsibilities? Management has two quick ways to judge. First, if you're getting too many grievances, something's gone wrong. On the other hand, if you're getting none, odds are you're heading for labor trouble.

In the average plant, grievances are a good barometer of the personnel climate. You want a few, just to know what's on the minds of your people. But you want the kind that can be settled as they occur. It goes without saying that the grievance procedure which has been established through negotiation must be workable and practical. Furthermore, not only supervisors, but employees and shop stewards as well, should understand it.

Most companies make it clear that they expect their supervisors to settle grievances unless they are of a very unusual nature. For if a foreman hears an employee's complaint only as a matter of routine, and then passes the buck to the personnel department for a decision, he's been eliminated from the grievance procedure. Although the contract may say that the original complaint is to be heard by the foreman in the presence of the shop steward, the foreman who passes the buck to the personnel department has washed his hands of the matter and takes no responsibility for the outcome of the dispute. What happens is this: staff becomes line, makes line decisions.

Naturally you must listen to your employee's story sympathetically. Of

* Division Manager, Personnel, American Management Association

course you must investigate the facts. Certainly you would be foolish to give instant decisions on questions that require reflection. And you're not smart if you do all the talking when one of your men is trying to edge in a word about something that has made him angry.

Your management has set its industrial relations policy. You must work within the framework of that policy, and put the policy into practice. This means you must have a finger-tip knowledge of the rules and regulations of the company. More than that, you must know the "why" of these rules and regulations.

Policy of any kind must be applied consistently and fairly. You can't go by the book just when it suits you. If a rule is generally disregarded, it can't be put to work simply because in a particular situation it would be to company advantage to do so. The employee who can prove that he's gotten a rough shuffle in the application of policy, that he's been treated in a discriminatory manner, is very likely to win his case before an arbitrator, no matter what the rules say.

The grievance procedure is an important part of the union contract, perhaps the most important. It's imperative for management to spell out in the agreement what will be held a legitimate grievance, at least so far as arbitration is concerned. Usually that definition runs something like this: "A grievance shall be a misunderstanding, interpretation, or violation of the specific terms of the contract." This provides the foreman with solid basis for action. When you discuss a worker's complaint, you can quickly determine whether you're faced with a grievance that might eventually come before an arbitrator.

Even if a worker has a complaint that by no stretch of the imagination could be considered a grievance under the contract, he should be given a chance to speak out. You may be able to help. In any event it does a person good to get things off his chest. At the same time, when a man comes in with what might be termed a blue-sky gripe, you're in a position to point out that, contractually, there is no case. If your manner is reasonable and your explanation factual, you provide the arguments that the shop steward can use later on to talk his client out of trying to push his case up to a higher authority. But always remember that the shop steward is the representative of the employees.

Here is a simple check list that may help you in measuring the effectiveness of the job you are doing grievancewise:

1. You must understand the difference between a grievance in the strict, or arbitrable, sense of the word, and the blue-sky grievance. You must act accordingly.

2. You must have authority to act decisively. You must be sure you will receive top-management backing. You cannot be arbitrary. Your job is to explain policy, not merely to announce it.

3. You must realize that the settlement of a grievance constitutes a precedent. In deciding a question, you should have access to records

that will tell you how management settled similar questions in the past.

4. You must make certain that you consistently apply company policy unless in a special situation the rigid adherence to rules is unfair to an employee. However, if you deviate from policy, you should be guided by the advice of the industrial relations department. You should also write down the circumstances that caused you to make an exception and specifically point out to the employee and the shop steward that the departure from the rules in no way constitutes a precedent. Preferably, the employee and the union representative should have this understanding in writing, and the industrial relations staff must be fully informed on, and agree to, the action taken.

5. You should understand that your settlement of any grievance issue lays the groundwork of the company's case should the dispute be taken to an arbitrator. You must act so that you will convince an impartial outsider your decision was the proper one.

6. You should maintain individual production records for each employee in your department. You should also have in your file adequate information on an employee's wage history, merit increases if any, disciplinary offenses, attendance records, etc. Very often, data of this kind make the difference between winning and losing an arbitration case.

7. You must know how to write a formal answer to a formal written grievance. What you put down on paper at this first stage of the procedure may become of paramount importance.

8. You must realize that the job of the shop steward is to represent the workers; that the very nature of his work compels him to argue for cases that are ridiculous. The skilled supervisor can quickly sense when a union representative is simply going through the motions.

9. You must understand that there are times when, for tactical reasons, the union floods management with grievances. You must know how to act firmly at such times. When this situation occurs, you should do your best to get a careful explanation from management as to how you are to deal with it.

10. You must be very cautious about making "gentlemen's agreements" with the shop steward. The steward may not be re-elected—and maybe he's not a gentleman.

11. You must have the reputation for fair and honest dealings. Your word must be good.

12. You must have a complete knowledge of the provisions of the union contract, and how management interprets these provisions. Many companies hold meetings of supervisors and union stewards when a new contract is signed to make sure each side has a similar understanding of the various sections.

13. You should seek the advice of the industrial relations department whenever an unusual type of grievance comes up.

14. You should stick closely to the time limits set up by the contract for the adjustment of grievances. ◆

**Photography is a vital aid in spotting waste motion. Here camera records movements made by a worker removing nylon yarn from a bobbing machine.**

# Catching Waste Motion with the Camera

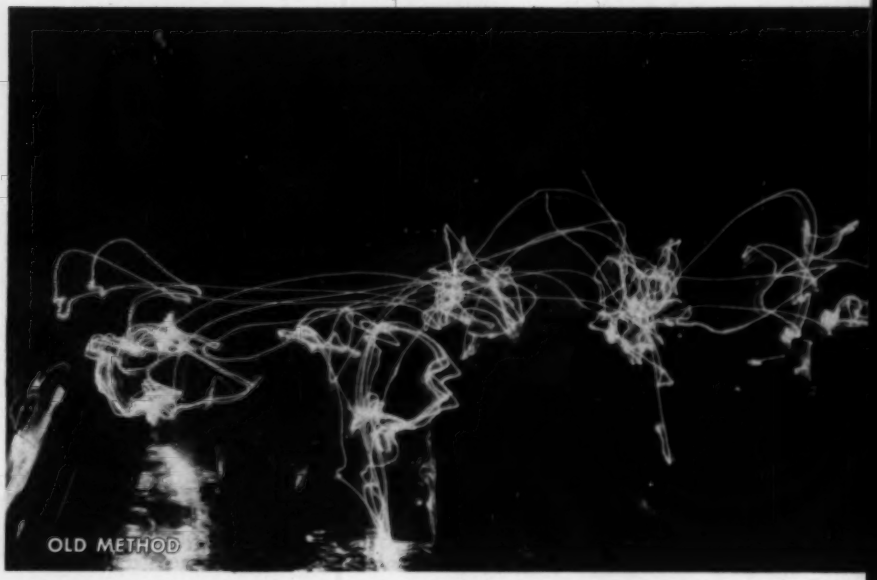
**Photography streamlines production at Du Pont. Camera spots waste motion in different operations and shows whether work-pattern improvements are effective**

PUT the finger on waste motion, find a faster, easier, more productive way of doing a job—that's what time-study men, methods engineers, and efficiency experts are for. With labor costs soaring, their job is becoming increasingly important, because waste motion is now more of a bugaboo than ever before. It's costly and inefficient, slows production, creates worker fatigue.

Like many other firms, E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. has found that one of the best ways to attack the waste-motion problem is with a camera. Photography is used in two ways: to spot operations that need to be streamlined and to find out whether improvements that are made are really doing the job.

At Du Pont two methods of photography are generally used:

One technique is to set up a camera in a darkened room. The lens is left open while a worker with small flashlight bulbs attached to his wrists goes




Complex light pattern made by flashlight bulbs attached to worker's wrists shows the numerous hand motions that were formerly needed to wrap cellophane

through a regular job operation. As the job is completed, a flash bulb is fired. The resulting picture shows the various movements of the worker's hands throughout the operation and gives the time-study men a chance to examine the work pattern in detail to see where improvements can be made.

A second method requires use of multiple flash. Again the lens is left open in a darkened room while a worker goes through a routine job procedure. The blurry picture that results shows the different movements the worker had to perform while doing the job. Thumb-rule guide for time-study men analyzing this type of picture is this: The blurrier the photo, the more waste motion in the job.

Photographs taken by either method give a definite indication of how much waste motion is involved in different operations. And pictures taken after changes have been made in the job operation show whether the result is really an improvement.

Du Pont is so sold on studies of this type that it has been spending nearly five million dollars per year to analyze and improve individual jobs. Results in some cases are truly astonishing. For example, study of one drill-press operation showed that a simple change in the design of a drill would eliminate more than 2,500 motions per day for the operator.

rolls for cigarette packs at a Du Pont cellophane plant. Light pattern of improved wrapping method shows clearly that job streamlining was a success.

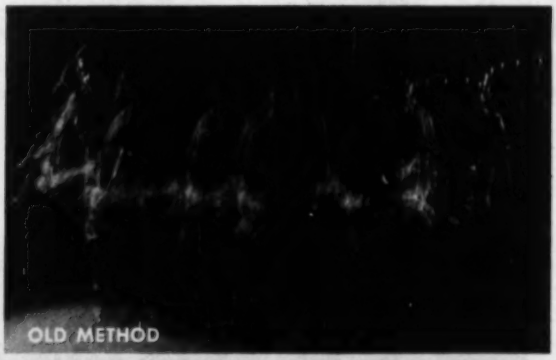
Multiple-flash photograph shows the many movements that had to be made to put a lid on a barrel.

Du Pont simplified the operation by developing durable paper cover that can be slid on the barrel.

Old method of drilling gun parts at Remington Arms' Illion, N. Y., plant required many hand motions.

New drilling machine was installed which simplifies operation markedly. Operator can now work sitting down.

Blurry photo shows the many motions a worker had to go through in a yarn-doffing operation.




Du Pont methods engineers studied the job and were able to cut out many waste motions.

*they're saying in conferences . . .*

# . . . MATERIALS HANDLING

*By Robert C. Ross*

**This article has been adapted from a paper presented at the American Management Association Special Manufacturing Conference "Cutting Production Costs," in Cleveland, earlier this year. In coming months we shall print other AMA conference material that we think will be profitable reading for supervisors.**

ESTIMATES of the manpower industry uses for materials handling range from a conservative 20 per cent to a high of 80 per cent. Using the 20 per cent figure, materials handling in 1953 cost Eastman Kodak Company 55 million dollars, without adding anything to product value. A reduction of only one per cent in this cost would have meant a saving of $550,000. This is why cost-conscious management regards materials handling as potentially the best source for reducing overhead.

The best places to look for possible cost cuts in materials handling are the receiving department, the storage area, the production area, and the shipping department. First check handling in the receiving department. Then find out how material gets from the receiving department to the storage department. In the production area, check handling operations of material as it comes to the machines, while it's being worked on, and after it leaves the machines. In the shipping department, analyze storage, order filling, and any other handling activities.

There are five parts of any handling job which should be investigated for possible cost cutting:

***Manual handling.*** Any use of the hands to lift, carry, push, pull, or position is a potential source of cost reduction.

***Unnecessary time.*** Check the time required to perform certain handling operations. It shouldn't take more than an hour to unload a truck or over a half-hour to get material out of storage and into the production department. In most plants, ma-

terial shouldn't remain in the production area more than twice the time it takes to turn out the item. It shouldn't take more than a half-minute per item to locate items in storage, and machines shouldn't be kept idle because operators are forced to perform handling operations.

***Improper loading.*** Are employees carrying too heavy a load? Is equipment carrying too small a load for its rated capacity? Are large quantities of small items being moved through the plant periodically? A yes answer to these questions means costs can probably be cut.

***Poor use of space.*** A crowded, congested plant means inefficient materials handling. Check to see if there are goods on your shipping floor that are not destined for immediate shipment.

***Excessive travel distance.*** If goods travel farther than the combined distance of the width of the shipping department, the receiving department, the storage department, and the individual machine areas, there is room for reducing costs.

To get the facts on materials-handling operations, find the answers to these questions: What is being done? When is it being done? Where is it being done? Who is doing it? How is it being done? How long does it take? Why is it being done? It may pay to make out a questionnaire covering the five steps involved in materials handling.

Here are eight possible ways to reduce handling costs:

***Elimination.*** First consider elimination of handling. If this can't be done, perhaps some of the paper work incidental to handling can be cut out.

At Eastman it was found that in an operation where an operator plug-gauged Cine-8 reels, the gauging of the sprocket holes and the handling involved could be eliminated. The clearance of the hole was increased slightly, and a better production control method was used for the machine that made the hole. It was reasoned that any defective spool which escaped the quality control mechanism at the machine would be caught on the spooling machine when the film was about to be spooled on the reel. Elimination of plug-gauging resulted in a saving of $6,200 a year.

***Combination.*** If an operation can't be eliminated, try to work it in with others. For example, palletization can make one big load out of a lot of little ones.

Where possible, combine handling operations. A few years ago, Eastman was making shipments to customers from nine buildings in Kodak Park and from two other plants in the city. By shifting these shipping and handling operations to one distribution center, tremendous savings re-

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Mr. Ross was graduated from Cornell University in 1941. After a period of military service, he joined Eastman Kodak Company as a product engineer. At present he is Senior Industrial Engineer at the Kodak Park Works. He is a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the American Materials Handling Society, and has spoken on materials handling before engineering groups.

sulted. And the job of transporting material between buildings and plants in the city is now done by an over-all trucking department rather than by the individual plants and buildings. This has meant another important saving.

***Rearrangement.*** If you can't eliminate or combine your operations, try changing their sequence or arrangement.

In slit-chopping and spooling film, Eastman rearranged some of the operations in sequence and located all the operations on one floor. This resulted in a considerable saving in travel distance and in operating cost.

In another instance, the addition of pallet racks to a storage area increased its capacity 20 per cent. Previously, to fill orders of less than pallet-load quantities, it was necessary to keep pallets on the floor without any others on top of them, so that cases could be pulled off the top of the pallet load.

This meant a considerable waste of overhead space. The use of pallet racks, however, makes it possible to pull cases off the top of the pallets and, at the same time, use the overhead space for additional storage.

***Simplification.*** If it is not possible to eliminate, combine, or rearrange handling operations, it may be possible to simplify them. In the operation involving plug-gauging Cine-8 reels, a gauge was formerly inserted between the reel flanges. If the reel bound, it was rejected and sent back

"Getting a little behind, eh, Murcheson?"

for adjustment. This was strictly a handling operation. Here's how it was simplified.

Instead of using the gauge, a girl now drops the reel in a chute, where it rolls down a machined bar known as a track gauge. Any reel hanging up on the bar is pulled off and sent out for adjustment. The reels that pass this test are carried away by a conveyor.

***Mechanization.*** Mechanization may help reduce overhead costs by taking the handling away from the worker and giving it to the machine: Replace two-wheel hand carts with fork trucks; use pneumatic tubes instead of messengers.

***Education.*** This is another way handling costs may be reduced. A training course for Eastman fork-truck operators pays for itself by reducing maintenance on materials-handling equipment. Other savings: less product damage, reduced building damage, more efficient operations. Material on company bulletin boards and in company newspapers can also be used for education.

***Standardization.*** Still another possibility is standardization. Concentrate on a few makes of materials-handling equipment to simplify maintenance and procurement problems.

Eastman, for example, has standard specifications for the two types of pallets it uses. With more than 100,000 pallets in use at Kodak Park, standardization has meant important dollars-and-cents savings. The standard pallet patterns are printed right on the container, so that any handler, by glancing at the printed pattern, can properly palletize the item.

Also, make sure that all component parts of a materials-handling system work with one another. Scheduling materials-handling equipment increases the amount of work that it can do. A stock-location system can boost the efficiency of stock pickers.

***Communication.*** A good communication system can also improve materials handling. Communication may be written, as in the use of route tickets or a Telescriber; it may be visual, as in television; or it may be oral, as in radio and teletalk.

Eastman's truck department and most of the trucks that are not on a regular scheduled route are equipped with a radio telephone. This has increased the use of these vehicles considerably. The dispatcher knows exactly where each truck is and can direct it to the next place of work. This means it doesn't return empty to the dispatcher after each job. Radio truck communication can be used both inside and outside the plant. ◆

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Business is always a struggle. There are always obstacles and competitors. There is never an open road, except the wide road that leads to failure. Every great success has always been achieved by fight. Every winner has scars. The men who succeed are the efficient few. They are the few who have the ambition and will power to develop themselves.

—Herbert N. Casson, quoted in *Forbes Magazine of Business and Finance*

# HOW TO PARTICIPATE

## *in Supervisory Management*

READING this magazine enables a supervisor to profit from the ideas and experiences of others. But reading is just one form of participation. It involves only the receiving of ideas. To fully participate in SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT, a supervisor should, now and then, share his own ideas. This means writing them down and perhaps getting them into print. How does a person write for publication? What qualifications should a supervisor have? Must he know all the fine points of grammar and sentence construction before he begins? No, not necessarily. What is really needed is something to say, an idea or experience that he wants to pass on to others.

Most people in business and industry aren't professional writers. Yet month after month there are many fine articles in management magazines written by these very people. In reading this first issue of SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT, you probably noticed that most of the authors are in, or connected with, industry. It's safe to say that their writing has helped them to be more effective on their regular jobs because they've learned to express themselves clearly and concisely. Meanwhile, their articles help others.

So many supervisors, too, have ideas and experiences that would help others. Think back over the past few months:

- Have you worked out a way to handle or store material more effectively, to cut operating time or costs, to promote safety consciousness among your workers?
- Have you dealt effectively with an uncooperative union steward or an unusual type of grievance?
- Have you solved an annoying production problem with an ingenious technical improvement?
- Have you successfully handled a particular employee problem such as absenteeism or lack of interest in the job?

If you have an accomplishment of this sort, then you have something to write about. You may tell your story in a short paragraph or in an article running several pages.

Please write to Hubert Clay, Editor of SUPERVISORY MANAGEMENT, 1515 Broadway, New York 36, New York. Include your job title and name and address of your company. If possible, keep a copy of your material.

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